This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com

Digitized by Google

29

~~NS. 94 F. 26~~

REP F 12340

~~B/D 3636 t.1~~

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY,

INSTITUTED IN MAY M.DCCC.XLIII.

FOR THE PUBLICATION OF TRANSLATIONS OF THE WORKS OF JOHN CALVIN.

Digitized by Google

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE EPISTLE OF SAINT PAUL

TO

THE ROMANS.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

EDITED FROM THE ORIGINAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF
CHRISTOPHER ROSDELL, PREACHER,

BY HENRY BEVERIDGE, ESQ.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR THE CALVIN TRANSLATION SOCIETY.
M.DCCC.XLIV.

Digitized by Google

EDINBURGH PRINTING COMPANY, SOUTH ST DAVID STREET.

Digitized by Google

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THIS Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans was written by Calvin during his residence at Strasburg, after the Genevese had, by expelling him and his colleagues, Farel and Viret, deprived their city of its best and noblest ornaments. The comparative leisure thus obtained could not have been employed to better purpose. As often happens, in the course of Providence, more especially where the interests of religion are concerned, good was brought out of evil, and the particular loss which Geneva sustained by the expulsion of Calvin was far more than compensated by the boon which it enabled him to bestow on the Church at large.

The importance of this Epistle, the intricacy of many of its parts, and the prominence which it gives to those leading views of doctrine which Calvin made it the business of his life to illustrate, were well fitted to call forth his unrivalled powers as a commentator; and, accordingly, it seems to be generally admitted, that nowhere would it be easy to find, within the same compass, so much clear, succinct, profound, and practical theology.

In accordance with the object of the Calvin Translation Society, the translation now published is a reprint of one executed by Christopher Rosdell, and published in 1583. The translator, aware of the importance and difficulty of his

Digitized by Google

task, appears to have thought he should best perform it by adhering as closely as might be to the original, not only in the sense, but also in the structure of the sentences. The fidelity thus secured has not been obtained without some sacrifice. It has at times given the translation a stiffness and obscurity which rendered a certain degree of revision necessary. In this revision the text has not been interfered with, nor any explanatory views introduced; but wherever the translation appeared to have been inaccurately made, or to be expressed in terms so obscure as scarcely to be intelligible, the original words have been given in a foot-note, accompanied with a literal translation.

The office thus allotted to the Editor, though of a very humble, has proved somewhat of a laborious, nature. In order to perform it aright, it was felt indispensable carefully to compare the original and the translation throughout, sentence by sentence.

A *fac-simile* of the old title-page is given, in compliance with a general rule of the Society.

H. B.

Digitized by Google

A *Commentarie vpon the E-* piſtle of Saint Paul to the Romanes, written in Latine by M. Iohn Caluin, and newely tranſlated into Engliſhe by Chriſtopher Roſdell preacher.

Whereunto is added a neceſſarie table for the better and more readie finding out of certayne principall matters conteyned in this worke.

Collof. 3. 16.

Let the worde of Chriſt dwel in you plenteouſlie in all wiſedome.

Imprinted at London for Iohn *Hariſon and George Biſhop.* 1583.

T D

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, AND HIS VERY GOOD LORD,

SIR EDWARD SEYMOUR, KNIGHT,

BARON BEAUCHAMP AND EARL OF HERTFORD,

CHRISTOPHER ROSDELL

WISHETH GRACE AND PEACE FROM GOD, ETC.

THE Church (Right Honourable and my good Lord) hath never doubted at any time of the author of this Epistle; but as the inscription thereof plainly testifieth, so the godly have always constantly believed, that it was written by that great doctor and worthy apostle, Paul; of whose praise, though Chrysostom and divers others have said very much, if it be compared with his desert, it is either nothing, or else but a little. For with what praises shall we sufficiently set him forth whom the Lord himself, immediately after his conversion, so highly commended; calling him a chosen vessel to bear his name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel? With what speeches shall we accordingly advance him whom the Lord lift up unto the third heaven? And with what ornaments shall we deck him whom the Lord did so richly adorn?—by kindred of the race of Abraham—by person naturally vehement—indued with singular dexterity, and of a noble courage—by calling an apostle of Jesus Christ, immediately called of the Lord unto the ministry of the gospel, as he testifieth to the Galatians, saying, "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father,") &c.—immediately taught from above, as it is written, "Now, I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me was not

Acts ix. 15.

2 Cor. xii. 2.

Gal. i. 1.

Gal. i. 11, 12.

Digitized by Google

after men; for neither received I it of man, neither was I
Acts ix. 3. taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ,"—by the
Acts xix. 6. visible gift of the Holy Ghost invested into his ministry and apostleship—and, finally, by great signs and wonders confirmed in the same. By which things, as the dignity and authority of the holy man is confirmed unto us, so all men are taught with what reverence they should hear and receive whatsoever hath proceeded from him; for seeing he speaketh unto us in the stead of Christ, bringeth a celestial doctrine, and such as is mixed with no error, we ought to hear and believe him as the voice of God from heaven; knowing assuredly that he is of the number of those of whom it is said, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me," &c. And, therefore, they commit most horrible blasphemy against God, whose impudent mouths are open against the apostolical authority of so excellent an instrument of the Lord. But, no doubt, such miscreants and rebellious wretches do feel the efficacy and light of his apostolical doctrine, whereby their wicked studies are manifested and reproved, according to the saying of Christ: "Because their deeds are evil, they hate the light;" and seeing they hate it, but yet cannot extinguish it, they do what they can to discredit it. Yea, and that which of all others is most abominable, they go about, by perverting holy Scriptures, to maintain and defend their devilish doctrine.

Whence it cometh, that by abusing the testimony of Peter, they labour to persuade the unlearned that the Epistles of Paul are hard to be understood, and obscure; yea, such as minister causes of errors unto the unskilful, and therefore are not to be read of the common sort, but rather to be restrained and forbidden. The words of Peter are these:
2 Pet. iii. 15. "And suppose that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul, according unto the wisdom given unto him, wrote to you, as one that in all his epistles speaketh of these things; amongst the which some things are hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable pervert, as they do all other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." Which words do so much make for the commendation of the Epistles of Paul, that

Digitized by Google

they must needs be very impudent, and blinded with extreme malice, which wrest them to the obscuring of his doctrine: for, first, these words give unto Paul a celestial and heavenly wisdom; secondly, they testify that he wrote his Epistles according to the same wisdom, and that he wrote the same things, and to the same faithful people, to whom Peter himself wrote. But it is added, "amongst the which some things are hard to be understood." What then? Shall all the writings of Paul be taken away from the people and Church of God, because of the difficulty and hardness of some certain places? Or rather, were it not meet those obscure places should be faithfully and sincerely expounded, that the simple might understand them? By the same reason, let the Epistles of Peter also be inhibited and taken away, for in them there are many things hard to be understood; as may appear in his First Epistle, chapters iii. and iv., and in his Second Epistle, chapter ii. 1 Pet. iii. and iv. 2 Pet. ii.

But they are wrested (quoth they) of the unlearned and unstable; wherefore, it were better they were taken from the unlearned, and reserved only for the reading of the learned! By the same reason, also, all Holy Scripture may be taken away; for Peter testifieth of them, that they are perverted of the unlearned, and those [that] are unstable. What more reason is there why the use of Holy Scripture should be forbidden all men, because some, by perverting of them, have fallen to destruction, than that the use of fire and water should be debarred all men, because many have perished by them? Did the apostle write his Epistles to the bishops and other ministers of Christ only, and not rather to all faithful Christians [which] were at Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, Macedonia, &c.? Did he write of such things only as appertained unto the learned, and not rather of such things as are necessary to be known to all, and concern the salvation of all? If he wrote to the learned only, why saith he, "To all that be at Rome," and not rather, "To you, learned Christians, [that] be at Rome?" If he wrote of such things as concern the learned only, (and yet wrote the gospel, or glad tidings of salvation in Chr why saith he, "I am not ashamed of Rom. i. 5.

Digitized by Google

the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," &c.? But if both, the holy man directed his writings unto all, and also the things contained in them do appertain unto all, why rob they the vulgar and common people, or laity, (as they term them,) of that [which] the Holy Ghost hath given unto them; I mean the light of the apostolical doctrine, and reading of the Holy Scriptures? Contrary to the mind of Chrysostom, who vehemently exhorteth all Christians, and specially the laity, that they should get them Bibles, or, at the least, the New Testament; contrary to the mind of the holy apostle, who saith to the Colossians, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you plenteously in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing your own selves," &c.; yea, contrary to Christ himself, who saith, "Search the Scriptures," &c. And yet they blush not (how contrary soever they be to the pure doctrine of Christ and his apostles) to boast themselves for the only catholics of the world, and successors of Christ and his apostles! But this is no new thing, for Vice hath always delighted in the cloak of Virtue, Superstition in the name of Religion, and Heretics in the name of Catholics. How truly this is said of the Romish prelates at this day, we shall not need to seek far for proof; only it shall suffice to compare them in their now and new professed doctrines, with the ancient and sincere doctrine [which] was at first taught and received amongst the old and true Catholic Romans.

Upon the Epist. to the Coloss. Hom. 9.

Col. iii. 14.

John v. 39.

The sum and substance of which doctrine is registered by the Holy Ghost in this Epistle, whereat they do chiefly storm besides all other the writings of that good man, because it doth in a special sort detect their apostacy, convince their heresy, and bewray their superstitious hypocrisy; howbeit, the Church of God is not more bound unto the Lord for any portion of Scripture than for this most excellent and worthy Epistle, wherein is contained a clear and compendious epitome of Christian Religion; as may easily appear by the places therein discussed; namely, of Natural Knowledge, Civil Duties, the Law of Moses, the Gospel, Justification, Original Sin, Grace, Election, Predestination, Excæcation of the Jews and their Restitution, of the Sa-

Digitized by Google

crifice, of Christians, of Magistrates and Subjects, of bearing the weak, and avoiding offence, &c. So that, if a man understand it, he hath a certain way open unto him to the understanding of the whole Scripture.

Wherefore, in my judgment, (and I am not of that mind only,) the godly can nowhere better bestow their labour, to their edification in true godliness, than in reading, studying, yea, and committing to memory, this notable Epistle; which is not therefore put in the first place, as though it had been written first, neither (as the Romans, perhaps, would have it) for the dignity and worthiness' sake of the Roman Church, whereunto it was dedicated; but for the majesty and excellency of those things [which] are handled in it: specially for the doctrine of grace and justification, which is so plainly and diligently handled in certain chapters, that the whole Epistle deserveth to be read every day, and learned without book of the faithful. Yet, here I would have all Christians admonished, seeing the Lord requireth humble and reverent hearers of the Word; as it is written, "To him will I look, (saith the Lord,) even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words," that with meek hearts and due reverence they handle, hear, and read the Holy Scriptures of God, always remembering that watch-word of the apostle, "The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," &c.; and continually, for proof thereof, bearing in mind the example of Nicodemus, who, by the dexterity of wit, and all the helps of art [that] were in him, could not attain unto the meaning of the words of our Saviour Christ, and that in a common principle of religion, namely, regeneration.

Isa. lxvi. 2.

1 Cor. ii. 14.

John iii. 4.

Wherefore, let no man, through vain arrogancy, contemn the labours of others, neither through foolish presumption trust too much to himself. Uzziah, king of Judah, rejecting the priests' teaching him that he should not offer incense contrary to the law of the Lord, and thinking that he knew the law better than they all, for his arrogancy and presumption was smitten with a leprosy. But, on the contrary, the eunuch of Ethiopia, acknowledging his own weakness and ignorance, saying, "How can I understand except I had a

2 Chron. xxvi. 16.

Acts viii. 27.

Digitized by Google

guide?" and, humbly craving the help of Philip, received a blessing from the Lord. Thus, "He scattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he putteth down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble and meek. He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." [Luke i. 51-53.]

No marvel, then, why so few at this day profit accordingly in reading the Scriptures, seeing the greatest part of the people, (holy commentaries and expositions of the godly being neglected,) having their eyes blinded with self-love, comment upon them according to their own sense; whereby both errors increase and are maintained, and also the oracles of God most unreverently profaned. Which thing, as it cometh to pass in other books of Sacred Scripture, so principally in this Epistle; wherein, without all controversy, there are many things hard to be understood, which the unlearned, and those [who] are unstable, may easily pervert to their own destruction.

For preventing of which evils, it is meet, not only that godly and faithful interpretations be delivered unto the people; but also that they be diligently exhorted reverently to embrace them as the good helps of God, given for their edification in pure and undefiled religion, and seriously to read, hear, and mark them, as the means whereby it pleaseth the Lord to illuminate their minds with the true knowledge of his heavenly mysteries, always keeping themselves within the compass of their capacity; knowing that it is a good part of learning for a man to understand his own ignorance; for hence cometh the study and desire to be taught.

And this is (Right Honourable) the only cause [which] hath moved me to set forth this Translation upon the Epistle to the Romans; which thing, perhaps, will seem unto many needless and unnecessary, considering that the Commentaries of Master Peter Martyr were already in English upon the same matter.[1] Howbeit, if those men diligently weigh

[1] "Most Learned and Fruitfull Commentaries of D. Peter Martyr Vermilius, Florentine, Professor of Diuinitie in the Schole of Tigure, vpon the Epistle of S. Paule to the Romanes: Wherin are diligently and most profitably entreated all such matters and chief Common Places of Religion

Digitized by Google

with themselves how the Commentaries of the said reverend father are higher than that easily they may be reached unto of the simpler sort, and larger than that they may hastily be read over of such as are drawn away by other affairs, I doubt not but they will soon grant this my labour is not altogether needless and unnecessary. For, besides that none hath dealt more sincerely in expounding the Holy Scriptures, and more faithfully in drawing forth the true sense of deep mysteries than Mr Calvin, he hath this, as peculiar to himself, always to match his faithful sincerity with a plain briefness; so that men may, without any great loss of time, find that with him which would cost them much seeking in others. And this is not only a gain of time, but also a notable help for memory; as it is said,

> "Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis, ut cito dicta
> Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles."

Horat. Ars Poetica, 1335.

Finally, the reasons which have moved me to dedicate this my simple work unto your Honourable Lordship are in number three. First, That godly zeal in religion, and tender care for the vulgar people, (in such places as appertain to your Lordship's patronage,) that they should not be clogged with an idol, nor destitute of a guide, which I have always, since my first coming into your Lordship's acquaintance, noted in you; for who is more meet to be a patron unto that which tendeth unto the profit of the common sort, than he who wisheth nothing more, and studieth nothing so much? Secondly, That knowledge of the Latin tongue wherewithal, amongst other qualities which make you truly honourable, God hath richly endued you, and whereby you

touched in the same Epistle. With a Table of certaine Common Places and Expositions vpon diuers places of the Scriptures; and also an Index to finde all the principall matters conteyned in the same. Lately translated out of the Latine into Englishe, by H. B." Imprinted by John Day, 1568.

Several other editions of his Commentaries were published (by the same printer) in 1564 and 1570, &c. His most popular work was first published in English, under the following title: "The Common Places of the most famous and renowmed Diuine, Doctor Peter Martyr, diuided into foure principall parts: With a large addition of manie Theologicall and necessarie Discourses, some never extant before. Translated and partlie gathered by Anthonie Marten, one of the Sewers of hir Maiesties most Honourable Chamber. *Meliora Spero.*" Imprinted by Henry Denham, 1583.

Digitized by Google

are able to judge what sincerity and faithfulness I have used in this kind of labour: Thirdly, That bountifulness and liberality which your Lordship hath lately showed towards me, which presseth me every way (seeing I am by no means able to make satisfaction) to show myself thankful; and I know your Lordship doth not look for any other recompence.

Wherefore, humbly craving pardon for my boldness, and earnestly beseeching your Honour to accept in good part my poor New-Year's-Gift, as a pledge of my good-will towards you; which, notwithstanding it cometh after the time, yet I trust not out of season, I commit you to the tuition of Him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even his Father. At London, the 11th of January, 1583.

Your Lordship's faithful servant

to command, in Christ,

CHRISTOPHER ROSDELL.

Digitized by Google

THE AUTHOR'S EPISTLE.

JOHN CALVIN UNTO SIMON GRYNEY,[1] A MAN VERY WORTHY TO BE HONOURED, WISHING PROSPERITY.

I REMEMBER that, three years ago, when we communed familiarly between ourselves of the best kind of expounding the Scripture, that reason which pleased you greatly was also, at the same time, before all others approved of me; for we were both of this mind, that the principal point of an interpreter did consist in a plain briefness. And truly, seeing this is in a manner his whole charge, to show forth the mind of the writer whom he hath taken upon him to expound; look by how much he leadeth the readers away from the same, by so much he is wide of his mark, or rather after a sort wandereth out of his bounds; so we wished that amongst them, which at this day seek to further the study of Divinity in this kind of labour, there might some one be found that both studied for facility (or easiness,) and also gave his diligence not to trouble those [who] are desirous of learning, above measure with long commentaries. And although I know all men are not of this mind, and they which

[1] Simon Grynæus, or Grynée, was born in 1493, and died of the plague at Bâsle in 1541, two years after the date of this Dedication. According to Erasmus, he was an excellent Greek and Latin scholar, well versed in philosophy and mathematics, perfectly free from pride, modest almost to excess, and zealous for the advancement of literature.

Digitized by Google

are not of this mind have also their reasons which induce them to judge so, yet, notwithstanding, I cannot be drawn from the love of compendiousness. But seeing, through that variety [which] is graffed in the minds of men, some things please some men better than other some; let every man herein use his own judgment, so that no one man covet to bring all other men under his rules; so it shall come to pass that neither we, who are more delighted with brevity, shall refuse or contemn their labours, who are more copious and large in expounding the Holy Scriptures; and they, again, shall bear with us, albeit they think we are [too] brief and short, [concise.]

I could not choose but make a trial what good I might do herein to the Church of God; not as though I had already obtained[1] that which then seemed best unto us, either thought when I began that I could obtain it; but I endeavoured so to order my style or form of writing, that I might seem to apply my mind towards that example. How much I have profited herein, because it is not my part to judge, I leave that to you, and such as you are, to be esteemed.[2] Sure I am many will condemn my policy, in that I durst make a trial chiefly in this Epistle of Paul. For seeing so many men of excellent learning before this have taken great pains in the interpreting hereof, it is to be supposed there remaineth no place for others to better that [which] they have already done. And I must needs confess that, notwithstanding I was persuaded my work would be of some value, yet this cogitation at the first did terrify me, for I feared to incur the reproach of rashness, if, after so many cunning workmen, I should lay hand to this work. There are many Commentaries upon this Epistle, both of the elder and later writers. And surely they could no where better have bestowed their labour; seeing, if a man understand it, he hath a certain way opened unto him to the understanding of the whole Scripture.

I will speak nothing of the old writers, who, for their

[1] "Neque vero aut me assequutum nunc confido," not that I am confident I have now obtained. [2] "Tibi tuique similibus relinquo æstimandum," I leave to you, and such as you, to judge.

Digitized by Google

piety, knowledge, sanctimony, and antiquity, are of such authority that we ought to contemn nothing which hath proceeded from them. And name by name to recite all those that live at this day were to no purpose. Therefore, I will declare my mind touching those who have bestowed special pains herein. Philip Melancthon, according to that singular knowledge, industry, and dexterity, whereby he excelleth in all kind of learning above those which came forth before him, hath given great light. But because, as it may seem, his purpose was only to discuss the principal things, whilst he stayeth in them, wittingly he passeth by many things which may greatly trouble a simple wit. After him cometh Bullinger, who also for his merits hath gotten great praise; for he had an easiness coupled with his learning, wherein he greatly approved himself.

Finally, Bucer having set forth his travails, did (as a man would say) make up the matter.[1] For that man, (as you know,) besides the hidden [recondite] learning and abundant knowledge of many things, besides the sharpness of wit, great reading, and many other virtues, wherein he is almost inferior to none at this day, to be compared but with few, and excelleth many, is chiefly to be commended in this, that none in our time hath used more exact diligence in expounding the Scripture than he; therefore, as I do confess, it were a token of too impudent emulation to contend with such men, so it was never in my mind to take from them the least part of praise. Let them have that favour and authority which, by the confession of all good men, they have deserved. Yet, notwithstanding, (as I hope,) this will be granted unto me, that there was never at any time amongst men any thing so absolute, in polishing, garnishing, or setting forth whereof, there was not place left for the diligence of those [who] came after. I dare say nothing of myself, but that I thought this my labour would not be unprofitable; whereunto nothing else did ever move me than the public benefit of the Church. Moreover, I well hoped that in a divers kind of writing, I should not be pressed with any spite of emulation, which

[1] "Veluti colophonem imposuit," gave as it were the finishing point.

Digitized by Google

hing I was chiefly to take heed of. Philip [Melancthon] hath obtained his purpose, which was to open the principal points, wherein, whilst he bestowed himself, he let many things slip which are not to be neglected, not forbidding others to declare those also.

Bucer is both larger than that hastily he may be read of those [who] are tied to other business, and also higher, than that easily he can be understood of the simple, and those [that] are not very circumspect, [attentive.] For what argument soever he taketh upon him to intreat of, (through that plentiful wit wherein he passeth,) he hath such store of matter, that he knoweth not where to leave off. Seeing, therefore, the one of them hath not pursued all, and the other is more large than that he can be read in short time, methinks mine attempt hath no show of emulation. Yet I doubted with myself a good while, whether I [it] were better [to] make (as it were) certain gleanings after them and others, wherein I might gather those things which I thought profitable for the meaner sort, or else should make a whole comment, wherein of necessity I must repeat many things, which either of [by] all, or, at the least, of some of them, had been said before. But because they many times vary amongst themselves, which thing greatly troubleth the simple reader, who doubteth to whether of them he might the rather lean unto; I thought, also, it were not amiss, if, by showing the best interpretation, I did ease them of the pains of judging, who of themselves are not sufficiently able to judge aright; specially seeing I determined to comprise all things so briefly, that the readers should not spend much time to read those things with me which are contained in others.

Finally, I had great regard that no man should justly complain there were many superfluous things here. Concerning the profitableness hereof I will say nothing; and yet, perhaps, the godly, after they have read, will confess that they have gotten more hereby than modesty will suffer me in words to promise. And whereas I do sometimes disagree from others, or rather am somewhat contrary unto others,[1]

[1] "Jam quod ab aliis interdum dissentio, vel certe nonnihil diversus sum," and whereas I sometimes dissent, or, at least, am somewhat different from others.

Digitized by Google

therein I am to be excused. For, verily, the Word of God ought to be of such reverence with us, that through the diversity of interpretations it might not be drawn asunder of us, no, not one hair breadth. For so the majesty thereof is (I cannot tell how) diminished, and so much the more if the same be not done with great choice and sobriety. For if it be a sin to pollute any thing that is dedicate unto God, surely he is not to be suffered which doth unreverently handle that thing, which, of all other things [that] are in the earth, is most holy.

Therefore, it is abominable boldness[1] to use the Scripture at our pleasure, and to play with them as with a tennis-ball, which many before this have done. Yet a man might see at all times how that even those who have godly, religiously, and soberly handled the mysteries of God, have not always agreed amongst themselves. For God at no time hath vouchsafed his servants with so singular a blessing, that every of them should be indued with a full, perfect, and absolute knowledge. And it is not to be doubted but he doth it partly to the end he might humble us, and partly to retain us in the study of brotherly communication. Wherefore, seeing it is not to be looked for in this present life, albeit it were greatly to be wished, that there were a perpetual consent amongst us in expounding the places of Scripture; we must do our endeavour, that [we be] neither stirred with desire of innovation, nor compelled through lust of defaming others, nor moved by any hatred, nor yet tickled with any ambition, but only constrained thereunto of necessity, seeking nothing else than the public profit of the Church, [when] we depart from the judgments of those [who] were before us; and, again, that the same be done in the exposition of the Scripture; for concerning the points of religion, wherein chiefly God would have his to be of one mind, less liberty is to be taken. The readers shall easily find in me care of both these. But because it is not seemly for me either to judge or pronounce of myself, I do willingly permit this office to you; to whose judgment, if all men attribute

[1] "Affinis sacrilegio audacia est," it is an audacity akin to sacrilege.

Digitized by Google

much, there is nothing which I ought not to attribute, wherein you are thoroughly known unto me by familiar conversation, which, notwithstanding it many times diminisheth the reputation of others, it hath greatly augmented yours, which otherwise is famous with all the learned. Farewell.

At Argentine, [*Strasburg,*] *the* 15*th of the Calends of November,* [18*th October,*] 1539.

Digitized by Google

THE ARGUMENT

OF

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

In setting forth the utility of this Epistle, I know not whether I were best to tarry long, both because I fear lest through my commendations, which most certainly are far inferior to the dignity thereof, it be nothing else but obscured; and also, because even in the entrance thereof, it doth more clearly declare itself, and more lively show forth itself, than by any words can be described. Therefore, I think it now best to come unto the Argument, wherein, without all doubt, it shall presently appear, that besides many others, and the same very excellent virtues, this doth properly appertain unto it, which can never, according to the dignity thereof, be sufficiently praised; that if a man have attained unto the true understanding of it, he hath a speedy passage made him unto all the most secret treasures of the Scripture.

The whole Epistle is so methodical, that the very entrance of it is framed according to art. The workmanship whereof, as it is to be seen in many things, which shall be observed in their places, so specially in that, that the principal argument is drawn hence; for he having begun with the confirmation of his apostleship, descendeth thence to the commendation of the gospel; which, because it doth necessarily bring with it the disputation of [discourse concerning] faith, he passeth thereunto, the words of the text, [context,] (as a man would say,) even leading him by the hand. And so he

Digitized by Google

entereth into the principal question of the whole Epistle, viz., *that we are justified by faith;* wherein he is occupied unto the end of the fifth chapter. Let us, therefore, put down the general proposition of these chapters, to say, the mercy of God in Christ is the only righteousness unto men, while it being offered by the gospel, is apprehended by faith. But because men are so secure in their sins, and flatter and deceive themselves with a false imagination of righteousness, that they think they stand in no need of the righteousness of faith, except now they be cast down from all trust in themselves; again, they are so delighted with the sweetness of carnal lusts, and sound asleep in great security, that they are not easily raised up to seek after righteousness, unless they be smitten with the terror of God's judgment; therefore, he doth not only convince them of their iniquity, but also being convicted doth rouse them from their drowsiness.

First of all, he condemneth all mankind since the world began with ingratitude, that in so excellent a workmanship they did not acknowledge the workmaster; yea, when they were constrained to acknowledge him, they did not worthily honour his majesty, but profaned and violated the same with their vanity. So all men are proved guilty of impiety, than the which there is no more detestable wickedness. And to the end it might more plainly appear that all men are fallen from the Lord, he rehearseth the filthy and abominable works, whereunto every where men are subject, which is a manifest argument that they have degenerate from God, forasmuch as they are tokens of God's wrath, which appear not but in the godless. And because certain of the Jews, and also of the Gentiles, having covered their inward wickedness with the cloak of outward holiness, did seem unreproveable of these impious works, and, therefore, were thought to be exempted from the common condemnation, the apostle directeth his style against that feigned holiness. And because that vizard before men could not be drawn from those petty saints, he revoketh them unto the judgment of God, whose eyes behold the very hidden thoughts.

Afterward having made a distribution, he citeth the Jews

Digitized by Google

by themselves, and the Gentiles also by themselves, before the tribunal-seat of God. He taketh from the Gentiles that excuse of ignorance which they pretended; for their conscience, whereby they were sufficiently convicted, was unto them instead of a law. He urgeth the Jews with that chiefly which they took for their defence, namely, with the written law, whereof, inasmuch they were proved to be transgressors, they could not clear themselves of iniquity, seeing the mouth of God had already pronounced sentence against them. He preventeth also that objection which might seem to make for them, viz., that the covenant of God, which was unto them the mark of sanctification, was violated, unless there were difference put between them and others.

Here, first, he teacheth that the title of the covenant made them nothing better than others, seeing through their unfaithfulness they were fallen from it. Secondly, lest the constancy of God's promise should be in any part diminished, he granteth unto them some prerogative by the covenant; but such as consisteth in the mercy of God, and not in their merit. Then, finally, by the authority of the Scripture, he proveth all, both Jews and Gentiles, to be sinners, where also he speaketh somewhat of the use of the law.

Thus, when he hath deprived all mankind, both of the truth of their own virtue, and also of the glory of righteousness, and thrown them down with the severity of God's judgment, he cometh unto that which he purposed; namely, *that we are justified by faith*, showing what faith that is, and how we obtain thereby the righteousness of Christ.

Hereunto he addeth, in the end of the third chapter, a singular sentence to bear down the fierceness of man's pride, lest he should advance himself against the grace of God; and also lest the Jews should hem in the grace of God within the compass of their nation, he proveth by the way that it appertaineth to the Gentiles also.

In the fourth chapter, he argueth from an example, which, because it was clear, and, therefore, free from cavillations, he putteth it down; to wit, in Abraham, who, inasmuch as he is the father of the faithful, ought to be instead of a rule and general example. Having, therefore, proved him to be

Digitized by Google

justified by faith, he teacheth that the same way is to be holden of us. And hereupon he inferreth, by the comparing of contraries, to follow that the righteousness of works must vanish where place is given to the justification of faith. Which thing he proveth by the testimony of David, who, reposing all the blessedness of man in the mercy of God, doth take this from works, that they should make a man blessed.

After this he handleth that more at large which he had briefly touched before; namely, that there is no cause why the Jews should advance themselves above the Gentiles, who are partakers of the same felicity with them, seeing the Scripture declareth righteousness to have happened unto Abraham when he was uncircumcised. In which place he taketh occasion to intreat of the use of circumcision. After this he addeth, that the promised salvation doth depend upon the only goodness of God; for, if it depended upon the law, then could it neither bring peace unto our consciences, wherein it ought to be firmly rooted, neither were it like ever to come unto his [its] perfection. Wherefore, that it may be firm and sure, in embracing of it, we are to consider the only truth of God, and not ourselves; and that after the example of Abraham, who, not considering himself, did wholly set before him the power of God. In the end of the chapter, to the intent he might more aptly apply the alleged example unto the general cause, he conferreth those things which on both sides are like.

In the fifth chapter, after he hath touched the fruit and effect of the righteousness of faith, he is almost wholly occupied in amplifications, which serve to make the matter more clear. For, by an argument taken from the greater, he showeth how great things, we now being redeemed and reconciled unto God, are to expect (and look for) at his hands through his love, which was so bountiful towards us, being sinners, utterly undone (and cast away,) that he gave unto us his only begotten and only beloved Son. After this, he compareth sin with righteousness which cometh by free grace, Christ with Adam, death with life, the law with grace. Whereby he declareth, that the infinite goodness of God doth overmatch our sins, how great soever they are.

Digitized by Google

In the sixth chapter, he cometh unto sanctification which we have in Christ. For our flesh is prone, as soon as it hath tasted a little of this grace, to cocker wantonly his [its] sins and concupiscences, as though it had now dispatched all. Therefore Paul, on the contrary, declareth here, that we cannot be partakers of righteousness in Christ, unless also we lay hold on sanctification. He fetcheth his argument from baptism, whereby we are admitted into the fellowship of Christ; therein we are buried together with Christ, that being dead in ourselves, by his life we might be raised unto newness of life. Whereupon it ensueth, that no man without regeneration can put on his righteousness. From hence he draweth exhortations unto purity and holiness of life, which necessarily ought to appear in those who are translated from the power of sin into the kingdom of righteousness, having cast away the wicked cockering of the flesh, which seeketh a more licentious liberty of sinning in Christ. Finally, he doth briefly make mention of the abrogation of the law, in abrogating whereof the New Testament is made manifest, where, besides the forgetting of sin, the Holy Spirit is promised.

In the seventh chapter, he entereth into a most necessary disputation of the use of the law, which he had lightly by the way touched before; giving a reason why we are loosed from the law, because that by itself it had no power but unto condemnation. And lest this should turn to the reproach of the law, he doth mightily clear the law from all reproaches. For he showeth, that through our fault it came to pass, that the law, which was given for life, was made the matter of death. Declaring also how sin is increased by it. From hence he passeth to the description of the fight between the Spirit and the flesh, which fight the children of God feel in themselves, so long as they are shut within the prison of this mortal body; for they bear the relics of concupiscence, whereby they are continually drawn partly from the obedience of the law.

The eighth chapter is full of consolations, lest the consciences of the faithful being scared with that disobedience which he reproved before, or, rather, imperfect obedience,

Digitized by Google

should be overthrown. But lest that the wicked should take occasion hereby to flatter themselves, first, he showeth that this benefit doth not appertain unto any but unto the regenerate, in whom the Spirit of God liveth and is of force. Therefore, he unfoldeth two things: the first, that all those which are grafted into the Lord Christ by his Spirit are freed from the danger and fear of condemnation, howsoever they are yet laden with sins; secondly, that they which yet remain in the flesh, without the Spirit of sanctification, are not partakers of this so great a benefit; then afterward he declareth how great the certainty of our trust is, seeing the Spirit of God by his testimony doth drive away all doubting and wavering. Moreover, by an anticipation, (or preventing,) he showeth that the assurance of eternal life cannot be interrupted or disturbed through the present miseries, whereunto, for the time of this mortal life, we are subject; but rather by such exercises our salvation is furthered, unto the excellency whereof, if all the present miseries be compared, they are nothing. This thing he confirmeth by the example of Christ, who, as he is the first begotten, obtaining the principality in the house of God, so he is the first pattern whereunto we ought all of us to be conformed. And, therefore, as unto a thing most safe and sure, he addeth a notable triumph, wherein he triumpheth courageously against the power and engines of Satan.

And forasmuch as many were greatly moved, when they saw the Jews, who were the principal keepers and heirs of the covenant, to despise Christ; for thereby they gathered, that either the covenant was translated from the posterity of Abraham, which contemned the keeping [fulfilling] of the covenant, or else this was not the promised Saviour, which provided not better for the people of the Jews; he beginneth to meet with this objection in the entrance into the ninth chapter. Having, therefore, first of all, testified his good-will towards his countrymen the Jews, that they might not think he spake anything of malice, and also having mentioned those ornaments whereby they excelled others, he descendeth easily to the taking away of that offence, which did arise of their cecity or blindness; and divideth the sons of Abraham

Digitized by Google

into two sorts, that he might declare how that all those which are born of him according to the flesh are not to be reckoned in his seed, to participate the grace of the covenant. And, on the contrary, those which are not born of his seed to be counted for sons, if they be ingrafted by faith; whereof he proposeth an example in Jacob and Esau. Therefore he calleth us here unto the election of God, upon the which this whole matter must necessarily (consist and) depend. Again, seeing this election leaneth only upon the mercy of God, in vain is the cause thereof sought for in the worthiness of men. Reprobation is contrary, which, notwithstanding it is most just, yet is there no cause above the will of God. About the end of the chapter, he declareth, by the testimonies of the prophets, both the calling of the Gentiles, and also the reprobation of the Jews.

In the tenth chapter, having begun again with the testification of his good-will towards the Jews, he showeth that the vain trust of works was the cause of their ruin. And, lest they should pretend excuse by the law, he preventeth that, declaring how by the law we are also led as it were by the hand unto the righteousness of faith. Adding, that this righteousness, through the bountifulness of God, is indifferently offered unto all nations; but yet to be apprehended of those only whom God hath lightened with his special grace. And whereas more Gentiles than Jews are partakers of that blessing, he showeth that that also was forespoken of by Moses and Isaiah; the one whereof prophesied plainly of the calling of the Gentiles, and the other of the hardening of the Jews.

Here yet remained a question, whether the covenant of God put not some difference between the seed of Abraham and other nations. Whilst he goeth about to satisfy this question, first he admonisheth that the work of God is not to be bound unto the sight of the eye, seeing many times the elect pass our understanding.

Even as in old time Elias was deceived, who thought that religion was utterly perished among the Israelites, when as yet there were seven thousand alive. Secondly, that we are

Digitized by Google

not to be troubled with the multitude of unbelievers which we see abhor the gospel. At the length he affirmeth, that the covenant of God abideth, yea even in the posterity of Abraham according to the flesh, but yet in those whom God, according to his free election, hath predestinated. Then he converteth his talk unto the Gentiles, lest they, growing too proud through their adoption, should lift up themselves against the Jews as reprobates, when, in the meantime, they excel them in nothing but in the favourable acceptation of the Lord, which ought rather to be unto them a cause of humility. And the same, also, is not utterly departed from the seed of Abraham; for the Jews at the length, by the faith of the Gentiles, shall be provoked unto emulation, that so God may gather unto him all his Israel.

The three chapters following contain precepts (or instructions) touching manners; but they are diversely distinguished. The twelfth chapter containeth general precepts concerning a Christian life. The thirteenth chapter for the most part is spent in establishing the authority of magistrates; whereby we may make a most certain collection, [inference,] that there were then some unquiet persons which thought Christian liberty could not stand unless the civil power were overthrown. But lest Paul should seem to impose any thing upon the Church besides the duties of charity, he showeth that this obedience is also contained under charity. After this he addeth those precepts for the instruction of our life, which he had not mentioned before.

In the next chapter he taketh on him an exhortation, which was very necessary for the present time, [that age.] For there were some who, through obstinate superstition, being addicted to the observations of Moses, could not without great offence suffer the neglect of them. Again, there were other some, who, being confirmed, touching the abrogation (or taking away) of them, whilst they went about to remove superstition, purposely showed forth a contempt of them.

Both parties offended through untemperatures, [intemperance.] For the superstitious condemned the others, as contemners of the law of God; and they, again, without discretion, despised the simplicity of the others.

Digitized by Google

Therefore, the Apostle putteth down for them both a convenient moderation; calling these [who] were strong from pride and disdain, and those [who] were superstitious of infirmity and weakness from their too much forwardness.[1]

Moreover, he prescribeth a notable form of Christian liberty, that it might consist within the bounds of charity and edification; he giveth those [who] are weak wholesome counsel, whilst he forbiddeth them to attempt any thing against their conscience.

The fifteenth chapter beginneth with a repetition of the general sentence, as the winding up of the whole disputation, that those [who] are strong might bestow their strength to confirm the weak.

And because there was a perpetual strife between the Jews and the Gentiles about the ceremonies of Moses, the material cause of pride being taken out of the way, he endeth all the quarrel between them. For he teacheth them that the salvation of them both doth depend upon the only mercy of God, whereunto they leaning, ought to lay down all pride, and wherein they, being coupled together in the hope of one inheritance, ought every way to embrace one another.

Lastly, he coveting to make a digression unto the commendation of his apostleship, which brought great authority to his doctrine, taketh occasion thereof, whilst he excuseth and craveth pardon for his rashness, that he was so bold to take upon him the office of a teacher among them. Furthermore, he putteth them in great hope of his coming, which thing, he saith in the beginning of this Epistle, he had in vain hitherto gone about and proved; and this he doeth, adding the cause which presently did hinder him, namely, that the Churches of Macedonia and Achaia had committed to his charge the carriage of that alms unto Jerusalem, which they had given to relieve the poor brethren there.

The last chapter standeth wholly almost upon salutations; but that it being here and there tempered with certain precepts not to be contemned, is concluded with an excellent prayer.

[1] "Nimia morositate," from excessive moroseness.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

COMMENTARY

UPON

THE EPISTLE OF SAINT PAUL

TO THE ROMANS.

CHAPTER I.

1. PAUL, *a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, put apart* to preach *the gospel of God,*
2. (*Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures,*)
3. *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh;*
4. *And declared mightily* to be *the Son of God, touching the spirit of sanctification, by the resurrection from the dead:*
5. *By whom we have received grace and apostleship (that obedience might be given unto the faith) in his name among* [all] *the Gentiles:*
6. *Among whom ye be also the called of Jesus Christ:*
7. *To all you that be at Rome, beloved of God, called* to be *saints: grace* be *with you, and peace from God our Father, and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Verse 1. *Paul.* I would speak nothing at all of the name of Paul, seeing it is a thing of no such weight that we should stand long upon it, and nothing can be brought which hath not been spoken of [by] other interpreters before; but that, with small labour, I may satisfy some, with-

Digitized by Google

out any great contempt of others;[1] this question shall be dispatched in few words. Those who think the apostle did take unto him this name as a testimony of his victory over Sergius, the under consul, whom he converted unto Christ, are confuted by Luke himself, who showeth that he was so called before that time: neither do I think it likely that this name should be given unto him ever since he was converted[2] unto Christ. Which thing, I suppose, pleased Augustine, only that thereby he might take occasion of disputing wittily, while he saith, that of a proud Saul he was made a humble disciple of Christ. The opinion of Origen is more probable, who judgeth him to have had two names. For it is not unlike that this name Saul, being a name of his ancestors, was given unto him of his parents, to declare his religion and kindred; and the other name, Paul, to have been [was] added, to testify the title of[3] the city of Rome; both because they neither would have this honour obscured in him, which then was greatly esteemed, neither made they such reckoning of it, that it should extinguish the remembrance of the stock of Israel. That he useth the name of Paul oftener in his Epistles, this may seem to be the cause; it was more famous, and more used in the churches unto which he wrote; it was more gracious in the Roman empire, though [and] less known in his own kindred. For it behoved him to have great care to avoid that vain suspicion and hatred wherein the very name of a Jew was at that time with the Romans and provincials, and to beware he increased not the madness of his countrymen, and to take heed to himself.

Acts xiii. 7, 9.

Paul had two names.

A servant of Jesus, &c. He adorneth himself with these titles, that he might get authority unto his doctrine. And that he doth two ways: *First*, while he affirmeth his calling unto the apostleship. *Secondly*, when he teacheth that the same calling is not strange[4] from the church of Rome. For it was both very expedient that he should be[5] an apostle by the calling of God, and also known to be appointed to the

Paul two ways getteth authority to his doctrine.

[1] "Aliorum fastidio," weariness to others. [2] Was given to him on his conversion. [3] "Jus Romanæ civitatis," his title to the citizenship of Rome. [4] "Non alienam," not alien from, includeth. [5] "Haberetur," be deemed.

Digitized by Google

church of Rome. Therefore, he saith that he was a minister of Christ, and called unto the office of an apostle; whereby he signifieth that he did not rashly intrude himself thither. Straightway after, he saith he was separated or put apart, that he might the better prove he was no vulgar or common fellow, but an excellent apostle of the Lord. In which signification he had also before descended from the general unto what was more special, seeing that the apostleship is a kind of ministry. For whoso occupieth the function of teaching is to be counted amongst the servants of Christ; but apostles, by degree of honour, are most excellent amongst all others. This selection, or putting apart, whereof he[1] speaketh, doth declare both the end and use of the apostleship; for his mind is briefly to show to what end he was called unto this function. Therefore, whereas he saith he was a servant of Christ, that is common to him with all other teachers. In challenging unto himself the title of an apostle, he preferreth himself before others; but, because he deserveth no authority who intrudeth himself, he admonisheth that he was ordained of the Lord. The meaning is this,—that Paul is a servant of Christ, not a common servant, but an apostle, and that not by intrusion,[2] but by the calling of God. Then followeth a more clear exposition of the duty of an apostle, namely, that he is ordained to the preaching of the gospel; for I am not of their mind who refer that calling, whereof he speaketh, unto the eternal election of God. By separation, or putting apart, they understand either that whereby he was separated from his mother's womb, whereof he speaketh to the Galatians, or that whereby Luke saith, he was appointed unto the Gentiles. For simply he rejoiceth that he had God his author, lest any should think he had presumptuously usurped this honour. Here we are to note, that all men are not meet for the ministry of the word, wherein there is required a special calling; yea, they who think themselves most fit are to take heed, that without calling they thrust not themselves in. Moreover, of what sort the calling of apostles and bishops is shall be declared in another place. We must observe also,

Gal. i. 15.

All men are not meet for the ministry.

[1] "Deinde," next, omitted in translation. [2] "Temerario conatu."

Digitized by Google

The office of an apostle is to preach the gospel.

that the office of an apostle is to preach the gospel; whereby may appear how ridiculous those dumb dogs are, who, when they are glorious only in a mitre, a crooked staff, and such masking attire, yet they boast themselves to be the successors of the Apostles. The name *servant* signifieth nothing else than a minister; for it is referred unto the office.[1] Which I note for this cause, that the error of those may be taken away, who to no purpose dispute subtilely of this word *servant*, while they think there is contained under it a contrariety[2] between the service of Moses and Christ.

2. *Which he had promised before, &c.* Because that doctrine which is suspected to be new, even through the suspicion of newness, hath lost [loses] a great part of his [its] authority, he establisheth the faith of the gospel by the antiquity thereof; as if he should say, Christ came not into the earth upon the sudden, neither brought he a new and strange kind of doctrine; for he himself, together with his gospel, hath been promised, and looked for, since the beginning of the world. Now, because antiquity is many times feigned, he addeth witnesses, and these also approved, that all suspicion might be taken away; namely, the Prophets of God. Thirdly, he addeth, that their testimonies are truly registered; namely, in the Holy Scriptures. Out of this place we may gather what the gospel is; which he teacheth not to have been preached,[3] but only promised, by the prophets. Therefore, if the prophets did promise the gospel, it followeth then, that the Lord being at length manifested in the flesh, it was exhibited. They are therefore deceived that confound the promises with the gospel; seeing the gospel, properly, is a solemn preaching of Christ manifested, in whom the promises[4] are exhibited.

The doctrine of the gospel is no new doctrine.

A difference between the gospel and the promises.

3. *Of his Son, &c.* A notable place, wherein we are taught, that the whole gospel is comprehended in Christ; so that, whosoever goeth a foot from Christ, withdraweth

[1] "Ad officium refertur," refers to an office. [2] "Antithesin," an antithesis. [3] "Promulgatum," promulgated. [4] "Promissiones ipsæ," promises themselves.

Digitized by Google

himself from the gospel. For, seeing he is the lively and express image of the Father, it is no marvel, though he only be set before us, unto whom all our faith ought to bend itself, and in whom it ought to consist. This is therefore a certain description of the gospel, whereby Paul showeth briefly what is contained[1] in it. I have turned the words following, in the same case,

Christ is the sum of the gospel.

Jesus Christ, &c.[2] For this conjunction of the text seemed unto me best to agree. Whereupon it is to be concluded, that he who hath profited accordingly in the knowledge of Christ, hath obtained whatsoever may be learned out of the gospel. As, on the contrary, they who seek to be wise out of Christ, are not only foolish, but altogether mad.

Who was made, &c. Two things are to be sought for in Christ, that we may find salvation in him; his divinity and his humanity. His divinity containeth in itself his power, righteousness, and life, which are communicated unto us by his humanity. Wherefore the apostle put them both down precisely, in the sum of the gospel, that Christ was exhibited in the flesh, and in the same declared himself to be the Son of God; likeas John, when he had said that the Word was made flesh, he addeth, that his glory was seen in the flesh, as the glory of the only begotten Son of God. And it is not without great consideration that he fetcheth the kindred and pedigree of Christ, specially, from David's [his] great-grandfather;[3] for hereby he calleth us unto the promises, lest we should doubt whether this were he that was promised in old time. The promise made unto David was so famous, that it is evident by use to have been taken up amongst the Jews, to call the Messias the son of David. This thing, therefore, maketh for the assurance of our faith, that Christ came of David. He addeth,

Two things to be considered in Christ.

John i. 14.

According to the flesh,—that we might know he hath some-

[1] "Summatim comprendatur," is summarily comprehended.

[2] The words "Jesus Christ," in the original Greek, are placed immediately after the words "resurrection from the dead," and might be rendered "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Calvin says that he prefers the translation (adopted also by our English version) which connects "Jesus Christ" with "his Son," and to render the words, as standing together, "his Son, Jesus Christ."

[3] "Davide atavo," from his ancestor David.

Digitized by Google

what above flesh, which he brought from heaven, and took it not of David, namely, (that which he addeth afterward,) of the glory of the Deity. Moreover, in these words, Paul doth not only prove Christ to have taken the true nature of flesh, but also plainly distinguisheth the human nature from the divine in him; and so he refuteth the wicked doting of Servetus, who feigned Christ to have flesh composed of three uncreated elements.

4. *And declared to be the Son of God, &c.* Or, if you had rather, *determined* or *appointed*;[1] as if he should say, the virtue of his resurrection was instead of a decree, whereby he was denounced to be the Son of God: as it is said, "This day have I begotten thee." For that same begetting is to be referred unto knowledge. And albeit some men make here three divers testimonies of Christ's divinity; [first,] by power understanding miracles; secondly, the testimony of the Spirit; lastly, the resurrection of the dead; I had rather join them all together, and reduce all three into one, after this manner: Christ is the determined or appointed Son of God, having openly declared a true celestial, and the very same power of the Spirit,[2] when he rose from the dead; but this power is comprehended, when it is sealed by the same Spirit in our hearts. Unto which interpretation the phrase of the apostle agreeth very well; for he saith, he was declared in power, or mightily, because there appeared in him such power as was proper unto God, and proved him most certainly to be God. This power appeared in his resurrection; as in another place the same Paul, after he hath acknowledged that the infirmity of the flesh appeared in his death, commendeth the virtue of the Spirit in his resurrection. Yet this glory is not known to us, until the same Spirit seal it in our hearts. And that Paul, together with that wonderful power of the Spirit which Christ showed forth in rising from the dead, doth also understand that testimony which every faithful man feeleth in his heart, may be

Psalm ii. 7.

Christ declared to be true God by his resurrection.

2 Cor. xiii. 4.

[1] "Definitus." [2] "Exserta palam vere celesti et eadem Spiritus potentia," by having openly exerted a truly celestial power, viz. that of the Spirit.

Digitized by Google

seen by this, that he doth express sanctification by name; as if he should say, the Spirit as it sanctifieth doth establish and ratify that experiment of his power which it once declared. For the Scripture useth often to adorn the Spirit of God with such titles as may serve for the present purpose. So it is called of the Lord the Spirit of truth, of that effect whereof he spake in that place. Moreover, a celestial power is said to have appeared in the resurrection of Christ, because he rose again by his own strength, as he testified many times,[1] saying, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.—No man taketh my life from me." For he conquered death, (to whom he gave place according to the infirmity of the flesh,) not by external help gotten by entreaty,[2] but by the heavenly operation of his own Spirit.

John xiv. 17.

John ii. 19.

John x. 18.

5. *By whom we have received, &c.* Having ended the description of the gospel, (which, for the commendation of his office, he inserted,) now he cometh[3] to speak of his calling, for it stood him greatly upon to make the same approved with the Romans. Whereas he nameth grace and apostleship one from the other, it is an hypallage[4] for free apostleship, or grace of apostleship; whereby he signifieth, that it was wholly through the bountifulness of God, and not of his worthiness, that he was called unto so high an office. For, although in the sight of the world it hath nothing[5] besides perils, labours, hatred, and infamy, yet with God and his saints it is of singular and great dignity. Or, if you had rather say thus, I have received favour that I should be an apostle, it is all one. Where it is said,

Paul not called to be an apostle for his worthiness.

In his name, &c., Ambrose expoundeth it, that in the stead of Christ he was appointed unto the gospel, according to that saying, We are ambassadors for Christ. Yet I think their opinion is more sound who take *name* for knowledge, because the gospel is preached to this end, that we might believe in the name of the Son of God; and Paul himself is called a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ amongst

2 Cor. v. 20.

1 John iii. 23.

[1] "Aliquoties," several times. [2] "Precario auxilio." [3] "Redit," returns. [4] A figure of speech, denoting a transposition of the order of construction. [5] "Nihil fere," almost nothing.

Digitized by Google

Acts ix. 15. the Gentiles. *In his name*, therefore, is as much as if he should say, that I might make known what Christ is.

Into the obedience of faith, &c. That is to say, we have received commandment to bear the gospel unto all nations, whereunto they may become obedient by faith. From the end of his calling he advertiseth the Romans again of his office;[1] as if he should say, It is my part to execute that which is given me in charge, that is, to preach the Word; and it is your parts to obey the Word with all obedience; unless you will make that calling frustrate which the Lord hath given unto me. Whereby we may gather, that they do stubbornly gainstand the power of God, and pervert his ordinance, who unreverently and disdainfully refuse the preaching of the gospel, whose end is to bring us into the obedience of God. Here also the nature of faith is to be observed, which is therefore adorned with the title of *obedience*, because the Lord doth call us by the gospel; and we answer to his calling by faith; as, on the contrary, infidelity is the cause of all disobedience against God. I choose rather to translate it, *into the obedience of faith*, than *to obey faith*; because this latter cannot be said but improperly and figuratively, albeit it is once read in the Acts; for properly it is faith, whereby we obey the gospel.

They are contumelious against God, and injurious to themselves, that reject the gospel.

Acts vi. 7.

Amongst all the Gentiles, amongst whom, &c. It was not enough that he was appointed an apostle, except his ministry should have respect unto the making of disciples; therefore he addeth, that his apostleship did extend unto all the Gentiles. Straightway after he calleth himself more plainly the Apostle of the Romans, whilst he saith the Romans were comprehended in the number of the Gentiles, to whom he was given to be a minister. Moreover, the apostles have this commandment common unto them, that they should preach the gospel in all the world; neither were they appointed over certain churches, as pastors and bishops are. And Paul, besides the general charge of his function apostolical, by a special ordinance was appointed a minister to preach the gospel amongst the Gentiles. Neither hindereth that any whit, that he was forbidden to go through

Though all the apostles were sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, yet Paul specially.

Acts xvi. 6.

[1] "Vicissim officii," in their turn of their duty.

Digitized by Google

Macedonia, and preach the word in Mysia; which was done, not that certain bounds should be limited unto him, but that for the present time he was to hasten elsewhere; for the harvest was not yet ripe there.

6. *Called of Jesus Christ.* He giveth a reason which is somewhat nearer; *scilicet*, because the Lord had already showed in them an experiment, whereby he declared that he called them to the fellowship of the gospel. Whereupon it followed, if they would have their calling to stand, they ought not to reject the ministry of Paul, who was chosen by the same election of the Lord. Therefore, I understand this short sentence, *called of Jesus Christ*, by the way of a declaration, as though this word, *namely*, or *to say*, came between; for he signifieth that they are partakers of Christ by calling: For they who shall be the heirs of eternal life, are both chosen of the heavenly Father in Christ, and also, being elected, are committed to his custody and tuition as of a shepherd.

Whom God hath chosen in Christ, those he hath committed to his tuition.

7. *To all you which are at Rome.* By an excellent order he showeth what is praiseworthy in us. First, that the Lord of his bountifulness hath received us into favour and love; secondly, that he hath called us; thirdly, that he hath called us unto holiness; which commendation then taketh place, if we become answerable to our calling. Here ariseth unto us a very fruitful doctrine, which I will comprise in few words, and leave to the consideration of every man. Assuredly Paul defineth not the praise of our salvation to be in ourselves, but deriveth it wholly from the fountain of God's free and fatherly love towards us. For he maketh this the original, that God loved us. And what other cause was there of his love than his mere goodness? Hereupon not only our calling dependeth, whereby in his time he sealeth his adoption in those whom he had freely chosen before; but also we gather, that none can rightly associate or couple himself unto the number of the faithful, but they must certainly believe[1] that the Lord is merciful unto them, although they are unworthy and miserable sin-

What is commendable in us, and when the same commendation taketh place in us.

God's free and fatherly mercy is the fountain of health and salvation.

Two things are required in the true members of Christ,—faith in God's mercy, and the study of piety.

[1] "Confidant," trust.

Digitized by Google

ners, and being stirred by his goodness, must give all their study to come unto holiness; for he hath not called us
1 Thess. iv. 7. unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. Seeing the Greek may be translated by the second person, I do not see the reason why the person should be changed.

Grace and peace. Before all other things it is to be wished, that we may have God favourable towards us, which
As all things fall out for good where God's favour shineth, so, on the contrary, &c. is signified by *grace*. Then, secondly, that prosperity and success of all things may proceed from him, which is understood by the word *peace*. For howsoever all things seem to laugh upon us, if God be angry, even blessing itself is turned into a curse: Therefore, the only foundation of our felicity is the favour of God, whereby we enjoy true and perfect prosperity, yea, even in adversities also our salvation is advanced. And whereas he prayeth for peace from the Lord, we understand, that whatsoever good thing cometh unto us, the same is a fruit of God's favour. Neither is this to be omitted, that he doth also pray for these good things from the Lord Jesus. For worthily is this honour given unto him, who is not only the minister and disposer of his Father's bountifulness towards us, but also, together with the Father, worketh all things. Yet the mind of the
All good things come unto us through Christ. apostle properly is to note, that all the benefits of God come unto us through him. There are some who by the word *peace* had rather understand the peace of conscience; which signification I deny not but sometimes it hath; but, seeing it is most certain that the mind of the apostle in this place was briefly to put down the sum of good things, that former interpretation, which is approved of Bucer, is more convenient by a great deal. Therefore he, willing to wish the sum of felicity unto the godly, goeth unto the fountain, as of late, namely, the grace of God, which alone doth not only bring unto us eternal blessedness, but also is the cause of all good things in this life.

8. *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is published throughout the whole world.*

9. *For God is my witness, (whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son,) that without ceasing I make mention of you*

Digitized by Google

10. *Always in my prayers, beseeching that by some means, one time or other, I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.*
11. *For I long to see you, that I might bestow among you some spiritual gift to strengthen you.*
12. *That is, that I might be comforted together with you, through* our *mutual faith, both yours and mine.*

8. *First, &c.* Here beginneth the entrance, which is very aptly applied unto the cause; for, by reasons taken as well from his own person as from theirs, he doth conveniently prepare them unto docility, or easiness to be taught. The reason from their person is, that he reporteth the famousness of their faith. For thereby he insinuateth, that they, being laden with the public praise of the churches, could not refuse an apostle of the Lord, but they should deceive that opinion which all men had conceived of them; which is counted barbarous, and in a manner nigh unto infidelity.[1] As this report, therefore, ought to induce the apostle, that having conceived well of their obedience, he should take upon him, according to his office, to teach and instruct the Romans; so it bound the Romans again that they should not despise his authority. From his own person he stirreth them unto docility, with a testification of his sincere love. For there is nothing more effectual to procure credit unto him that counselleth, than if he have gotten this opinion, that he is thought even from his heart to study and provide for our wealth.[2] First, this is worthy to be noted, that he so praiseth their faith, that yet he ascribeth it unto God, as received of him; whereby we are taught, that faith is the gift of God. For, if thanksgiving be an acknowledging of a benefit, then he doth acknowledge faith to be of God, whoso doth give him thanks for it. And, in as much as we see the apostle beginneth his gratulations with thanksgiving, we may know that we are admonished that all our good things are the gifts of God. And, also, it is expedient that we acquaint ourselves with such kind of speeches,[3] as thereby we

Paul prepareth the minds of the Romans by reasons taken both from his own and their persons.

Faith is the gift of God.

We are at all times to use such speeches as may move us and others to acknowledge God's goodness.

[1] "Perfidiæ," perfidy. [2] Well-being. [3] "Talibus loquendi formulis assuescere," accustom ourselves to such modes of expression.

Digitized by Google

may the rather at all times be moved to acknowledge God to be the giver of all good things, and provoke others also unto the same mind. And if it be meet to observe this in the least blessings, much more in faith, which is an excellent and singular grace of God. Furthermore, here we have an example how we are to give thanks by Christ, according to the commandment of the apostle to [in] the Hebrews; even as we ask and obtain mercy at the hands of the Father in his name. Finally, he calleth him his God. This is a special prerogative of the faithful, to whom only God giveth this honour; for therein is contained a mutual respect,[1] which is expressed in the promise, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people;" although I had rather restrain it unto that person which Paul did bear, that it might be an approbation of that obedience which he performed unto the Lord, in the preaching of the gospel. So Ezechias[2] calleth God the God of Esay,[3] when he would give testimony unto him that he was a true and faithful prophet. So also, by a kind of excellency, he is called the God of Daniel, because Daniel had maintained his pure worship.

We must give thanks to God through Christ.

Heb. xiii. 15.

Jer. xxx. 22.

Isa. xxxvii. 4.

Dan. vi. 20.

Throughout the whole world. The commendation of good men was unto Paul in esteeming [estimating] the faith of the Romans like unto the whole world; for infidels, to whom their faith was rather an abomination, could neither give sincere nor probable testimony of it. Therefore, we understand it, that the faith of the Romans was published in the whole world by the mouths of all the faithful, who could both judge and speak aright of it. That this small and base company of men was not known to the wicked, no, not to those who were at Rome, that is no matter; seeing Paul passed by their judgment as a thing of nought.

By the whole world is meant the number of the faithful, which were scattered over the whole world.

9. *For God is my witness.* He showeth his charity by the effects. For unless he had loved them greatly, he would not so carefully have solicited their health with the Lord, and specially he would not have so earnestly desired to advance the same by his own labour. Therefore, that carefulness,

Paul showeth his love by the effects.

[1] "Relatio," relation. [2] Hezekiah. [3] Isaiah.

Digitized by Google

and that desire, are sure tokens of his love; for except they sprung from that, they could never be. And because he knew it was expedient for establishing credit to his preaching, that the Romans should be well persuaded of his sincerity, he added an oath, a necessary remedy as often as that talk, which ought to be firm and out of all doubt, is called into question. For if an oath be nothing else than a calling of God to witness, for the confirmation of our talk, they are very foolish who deny the apostle to have sworn in this place; and yet notwithstanding he transgressed not the commandment of Christ. Whereby appeareth that the meaning of Christ was not (as the superstitious Anabaptists dream) altogether to put down oaths, but rather to call us unto the true observation of the law; and the law permitteth an oath, forbidding only perjury and superfluous swearing. Therefore, if we will, accordingly as we should, swear, let us follow the sobriety and reverent discretion which appeared in the apostles. And to the end thou mayest understand this rule, know thou that God is so called to be a witness, that he is also called to be a revenger, if we do deceive. Which thing Paul expresseth in another place, in these words, Now I call God for a record unto my soul.

An oath is not altogether unlawful.

God is so called to witness in an oath, that he is called to be a revenger if we deceive.

2 Cor. i. 23.

Whom I worship in spirit.[1] Because wicked men who delude[2] God use no less boldly than rashly to pretend his name, Paul here commendeth his holiness,[3] that he might have the more credit; for whoso doth fear and reverence God will abhor to swear falsely. Moreover, he opposeth his spirit against outward hypocrisy; and because many do falsely boast themselves to be the worshippers of God, and in outward show appear to be so, he testifieth that he doth worship God from his heart. It may be, also, he had respect unto the old ceremonies, in which only the Jews thought the worship of God did consist; therefore, he letteth to understand that although he retained not that exercise, yet nevertheless he was a true worshipper of God; as he saith unto the Philippians, "We are the true circumcision, which serve God in the spirit, and glory not in the flesh." Therefore, he rejoiceth that he worshipped God in sincere piety of mind,

Which is the true worship of God.

Philip. iii. 3.

[1] I serve in my spirit. [2] "Illudunt," mock. [3] "Suam pietatem," his own piety.

Digitized by Google

which is true religion, and the lawful worship of God. It was expedient, (as I said before,) to the end his oath might have the more certainty, that Paul should testify his devotion towards God. For perjury, which the godly abhor more than a thousand deaths, is but a sport with the wicked; for it cannot be but, where there is a serious fear of God, there should also be such reverence of his name. It is, therefore, as much as if Paul should say, I know how great reverence and religious devotion there ought to be of an oath. I, therefore, do not call God to witness as the wicked use to do. And so by his example he teacheth us, that so often as we swear, we should give such testimony of holiness, that the name of God, which we use in our talk, might have his weight.[1] *Secondly*, He proveth by the [a] sign, that he worshipped not God hypocritically, namely, by his ministry; for that was a notable token that he was a man given to the glory of God, who, having denied himself, refused not, for the advancing of the kingdom of God, to sustain what dangers soever, whether of reproach, poverty, death, or hatred. Some understand this clause, as though he did therefore commend that worship, wherewithal he said he worshipped God, because it was according to the prescript rule of the gospel. Sure it is, that the spiritual worship of God is commanded in the gospel. But yet the former interpretation is much more consonant, namely, that he bequeathed[2] his obedience to God in the preaching of the gospel. Yet, in the meanwhile, he distinguisheth himself from hypocrites, who have another purpose than to serve God; as ambition, or some such like, doth cause[3] most of them; and it is far to seek that all should behave themselves sincerely and faithfully in that office. The sum is, that Paul was occupied sincerely in the office of teaching; because he applies that which, by the way of circumstance, he had spoken of his piety, unto the present cause. But hence we gather a profitable doctrine, which ought greatly to encourage the ministers of the gospel, when they hear that they do a thankful and precious service unto God in preaching the gospel; for what is it that should hinder them, when they know their

Where true fear of God is, there is also a reverence of his name.

A rule to be observed in calling God to witness.

Hypocrites seek not God in the administration of their office.

The preaching of the gospel is a precious service unto God.

[1] "Suum pondus," its due weight. [2] "Addicat," dedicates, or devotes. [3] "Impellit," actuate.

Digitized by Google

labour so to please God, and to be approved with him, that it is counted an excellent service? Moreover, he calleth it the gospel of the Son of God, because Christ is manifested in it, being ordained of the Father unto this, that while he is glorified, he should again glorify the Father.

That without ceasing. Yet he expresseth a greater heat of love, by his continual praying; for it was much, always to make mention of them, when he made his prayers unto God. And that we may have the sense more plain, I take this word, ἀπαύστως, instead of a noun; as though it were said, in all my prayers, or as often as I come unto God in prayers, I make mention of you. And he speaketh not of every invocation of God, but of those prayers whereunto whiles the saints will bestow themselves, all cares being set apart, they give their whole study to them. For oftentimes he might upon a sudden burst forth into this or that wish, and yet the Romans not in his remembrance; but as often as he did purposely, and as it were with meditation, pray unto God, amongst others he was also mindful of them. Therefore, he speaketh of peculiar prayers, whereunto the saints do purposely dispose themselves; as we see the Lord himself, in such prayers, to have sought for a solitary place. And withal, he giveth to understand how often, or rather how continually, he was occupied in them, while he saith, he prayed without ceasing.

The godly have used set and solemn prayers.

10. *Beseeching that by some means.* Because it is not like, that from our heart we seek his profit whom we are not ready to further with our help, after he hath declared his carefulness in procuring their salvation, now he addeth another argument, whereby he testified before God his love towards them; namely, in beseeching that he might help them. Wherefore, that you may have the full sense, read these words as though the word *yea* were interposed; "yea, beseeching, that by some means." And when he saith, *a prosperous journey by the will of the Lord*, he declareth that he doth not only look for the prosperity of life[1] from the favour of the Lord, but even thereupon to esteem his journey prosperous, if it be

All things ought to be counted prosperous which please God.

[1] "Viæ," of the journey. The original used by the Translator seems to have had "vitæ."

Digitized by Google

approved of the Lord; according to which rule all our desires ought to be ordered.

11, 12. *For I desire to see you, &c.* He might, after a sort, being absent, have confirmed their faith with his doctrine; but because counsel is always better taken of one present, therefore, he coveted rather to be with them face to face. And he showeth the end of his counsel, to signify unto them, that he would not take upon him so wearisome a journey for his own, but for their profit. By "spiritual gifts," he understandeth either the gifts of doctrine, or exhortation, or prophecy, which he knew he had received of the grace of God.

The right use of God's graces.

Here he hath notably set forth the lawful use of those gifts, under the word, "communicating" or "bestowing." For to that end are divers gifts given peculiarly to every one, that all might graciously one help another, and one make another partaker of those things which are given to every one.[1] Of this afterward.

Rom. xii. 3, and 1 Cor. xii. 11.

To strengthen you. He qualifieth that which he said of communication, lest he should seem to count them such as were yet to be instructed in the first elements, as though they were not yet rightly entered in Christ. Therefore, he saith, that he coveteth to help them in that respect, wherein they may yet be holpen which have profited greatly; for all of us have need to be confirmed till Christ be made perfect in us. And not being content to have spoken so modestly, he addeth, over and besides, a castigation or correction,[2] wherein he showeth that he did not so take upon him the office of teaching, but that also he coveted to learn again[3] of them. As if he should say, I desire so to confirm you, according to the measure of grace given unto me, that my faith also, by your example, may be encouraged; and so we may profit one another among ourselves. Behold into how great moderation this godly man submitteth himself, that he refuseth not to seek for confirmation of those who were but raw scholars![4]

Eph. iv. 13.

Neither speaketh he dissemblingly. For there is none in

[1] "Ad singulos," to each. [2] Επανορθωσιν. [3] "Mutuo," mutually. [4] "Rudibus tirunculis."

Digitized by Google

the Church of Christ so void of gifts, that he cannot profit us somewhat; but our malignity and pride hinder us, that we do not receive any such commodity.[1] We are so high-minded, and drunken with foolish glory, that, despising others, and setting them at nought, every man thinketh himself to be sufficient enough for himself. I had rather read it, with Bucer, by the way of "exhortation" than of "consolation," because so it agreeth better with the premises.[2]

None is so enriched with such plenty of God's graces, but he may sometimes reap profit by the simplest.

13. *Now, my brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that I have oftentimes purposed to come unto you, (but have been let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit also among you, as I* have *among the other Gentiles.*
14. *I am debtor both to the Grecians and Barbarians, both to the wise men and to the unwise.*
15. *Therefore, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are at Rome.*

Whereas hitherto he had testified that he did continually desire of God that he might at some time see them, because that might seem to be but a vain thing unless he would take occasion offered, now he certified them in that point; for he saith there was no want of will but of opportunity, because he was often interrupted of his purpose. Where we learn that the Lord many times overthroweth the counsels of his saints, that he might humble them, and by such humbling teach them to have respect unto his providence, that they might depend upon it; although the saints, who deliberate nothing without the will of God, are not properly driven from their counsels. For that is wicked boldness, without regard of God, to determine upon things to come, as who should say they were in our power; which boldness James reproveth sharply.

The counsels and purposes, yea, even of the godly, are many times interrupted.

James iv. 13.

Whereas he saith he was letted, thou mayest not otherwise take it, than that the Lord did lay before him more urgent business of the Church, which he could not leave without great damage to the Church. Thus the impediments of the godly and faithless differ, that these think

The godly esteem not impediments as the godless do.

[1] Add "ultro citroque," on this hand and on that.
[2] "Superioribus," previous context.

Digitized by Google

themselves then at length to be letted, when by the violent hand of the Lord they are so hemmed in that they cannot stir themselves; the other are content to take some lawful reason for an impediment, neither do they permit themselves to attempt any thing, either besides their office, or contrary to edification.

That I might have some fruit. Undoubtedly, he speaketh of that fruit, to the gathering whereof the Apostles were sent of the Lord: "I have chosen you, that ye might go and bring forth fruit, and your fruit might remain." Which fruit, albeit he gathered it not for himself, but for the Lord, yet he calleth it his, because there is nothing more proper unto the godly, than that which advanceth the glory of the Lord, whereunto all their felicity is coupled. And he saith he had received fruit amongst other nations, to the end the Romans might be in hope his coming unto them should not be unprofitable, which so many nations had proved to be fruitful.

John xv. 16.

God's glory and the felicity of the godly are joined together.

14. *Grecians and Barbarians.* Whom he understandeth by Grecians and Barbarians he showeth by an exposition, when he nameth the same in other titles wise men and unwise; for the which Erasmus turneth it, learned and unlearned; but I had rather keep the words of Paul. He reasoneth, therefore, from his office, that he is not to be counted arrogant, because he thought himself partly able to teach the Romans, howsoever they excelled in learning, prudence, and knowledge of things; for it pleased the Lord to send him also unto the wise.

Two things are here to be considered. *First,* That the gospel is appointed and offered by the commandment of God unto the wise, to the end that the Lord might subject unto him[1] all the wisdom of this world, and might cause all wittiness, all kind of science, and highness of arts, give place unto the simplicity of this doctrine; and so much the more, because they are brought into an order with idiots,[2] and are so tamed, that they can now abide those to be their school-fel-

Wise men must hear and learn the gospel.

[1] "Sibi," himself. [2] "In ordinem cum idiotis rediguntur," are reduced to the same rank with the unlearned.

Digitized by Google

lows under the schoolmaster Christ, whom before they would not have suffered to have been their scholars. *Secondly*, The unlearned neither are to be driven from this school, neither are they, through vain fear, of themselves to flee away from it. For if Paul were indebted to them, and is to be thought to have been a faithful debtor, undoubtedly he performed that which he ought. Wherefore, here they shall find, whereof they may be capable to enjoy it.[1] Here also all teachers have a rule which they may follow, namely, that modestly and courteously they humble themselves to the unlearned and idiots. Hereupon it shall come to pass, that they may bear more patiently many trifles, and devour almost innumerable contempts, whereof otherwise they might be overcome. Yet withal let them remember, that they are so bound unto the foolish, that they are not by overmuch cockering to maintain their foolishness.[2]

Unlearned men are neither to be feared away, nor yet to flee away of themselves, from the school of Christ.

Preachers must so apply themselves to the capacities of the foolish, that they cocker not their foolishness.

15. *Therefore, as much as in me is.* Now he concludeth that which he spake before of his desire, namely, that inasmuch as he saw it was his office to sow the gospel amongst them, that he might reap fruit unto the Lord, he coveted to answer the calling of God, so far forth as the Lord would permit.

16. *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian.*

17. *For by it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

16. *I am not ashamed.* This is a preoccupation, or preventing of the adversaries' objections, wherein he foreshoweth that he cared not for the scoffings of the wicked; wherein also by the way he maketh unto himself a passage unto the setting forth of the dignity of the gospel, lest it should be contemptible to the Romans. While he saith he is not

[1] "Cujus fruendi capaces erunt," what they will be capable of enjoying.

[2] "Eorum stultitiam immodica indulgentia non foveant," not foster their folly by excessive indulgence.

Digitized by Google

ashamed, thereby he giveth to understand that it is contemptible in the sight of the world. And so he prepareth them now to the bearing of the reproach of the cross of Christ, lest they should esteem less of the gospel, while they see it subject to the scoffings and reproaches of the wicked; but, on the contrary, he showeth in how great price it is with the godly. *First*, If the power of God ought to be in high estimation with us, that shineth in the gospel. If the goodness of God be worthy to be sought for and loved of us, the gospel is an instrument of that goodness; worthy, therefore, is it to be reverenced and honoured, if the power of God be to be reverenced; and as it is an instrument of our salvation, it is to be loved of us. And observe how much Paul attributeth unto the ministry of the word, when he testifieth that therein God showeth forth his power unto salvation; for he speaketh not here of any secret revelation, but of the vocal preaching of the gospel.

Wicked men scoff at and despise the gospel, but the godly esteem it as the instrument wherein God showeth forth his power unto salvation.

Whereupon it followeth, that they do as it were purposely refuse the power of God, and repel far from them his hand of deliverance, who withdraw themselves from the hearing of the word. But because it worketh not effectually in all, but only where the Spirit, the inward teacher, lighteneth their hearts; therefore, he addeth, "to every one that believeth." Indeed, the gospel is offered all men to[1] salvation; but the power thereof appeareth not every where. And whereas it is the savour of death unto the wicked, that cometh not so much of the nature of the gospel, as of their malignity and wickedness. By declaring one salvation, he cutteth off all other confidence; from which only and sole salvation, while the wicked withdraw themselves, they have a certain manifestation of their destruction in the gospel. Therefore, seeing the gospel doth indifferently call all men unto salvation, it is properly called the doctrine of salvation; for Christ is offered in it, whose proper office is to save that which was lost; and those who refuse to be saved by him shall find him a judge. Yet every where in the Scriptures this word "salvation" is simply opposed against "de-

That the gospel is the savour of death to the wicked, it is of their malice, and not of the nature of the gospel.

[1] "In salutem," for salvation.

Digitized by Google

struction;" therefore, when it is named, we are to regard what thing is spoken of. Seeing, therefore, the gospel doth deliver from the destruction and curse of eternal death, the salvation thereof is life eternal, "to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian." Under the name of Grecians now he containeth all the Gentiles, as may appear by his division wherein he hath comprehended all men under two members. And it is like that he chose this nation of Grecians chiefly, to set out other nations by them, because it was first, after the Jews, admitted into the communion or fellowship of the covenant of the gospel. *Secondly*, Because both for nighness and famousness of tongue, the Grecians were best known to the Jews. It is, therefore, the figure *synecdoche*, wherein generally he conjoineth the Gentiles to the Jews in the participation of the gospel; yet, notwithstanding, he putteth not the Jews down from their degree and order, inasmuch as they were the first in the promise and calling. Therefore, he reserveth for them their prerogative; but forthwith he adjoineth the Gentiles, albeit, in a lower degree, partakers with them.

Eternal life is the salvation of the gospel.

Synecdoche is, when by one many, or by a part the whole, or by a special the general, is understood.

17. *For the righteousness of God.* This is an exposition and confirmation of the former sentence, namely, that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation." For, if we seek for salvation, that is to say, life with God, first we must seek for righteousness, whereby we, being reconciled unto God, through his mercy may obtain life, which consisteth only in his benevolence. For, seeing God hateth unrighteousness, we must needs be righteous before we can be loved of him. Therefore he signifieth, that we cannot obtain salvation otherwhere than in the gospel; because God doth not elsewhere manifest unto us his righteousness, which only delivereth us from destruction. And this righteousness, which is the groundwork of our salvation, is revealed in the gospel; whereupon the gospel is called the power of God unto salvation: so he reasoneth from the cause unto the effect. Moreover, note how rare and precious a treasure the Lord doth bestow upon us in the gospel, namely, the communication of his righteousness. By the righteousness of God I

Salvation is life with God.

Without righteousness there is no life.

Digitized by Google

Righteousness of God is that which is approved before God.

understand that righteousness which is approved before the tribunal seat of God; as, on the contrary, he is wont to call that the righteousness of men, which, in the opinion of men, is reckoned and counted for righteousness, although, indeed, it be but a smoke. And yet I doubt not but Paul alludeth unto many prophecies, where the Spirit of God often celebrateth the righteousness of God in the kingdom of Christ to come. Others expound it for "righteousness which is given unto us of God." And surely I confess the words will bear this sense; because God doth justify us by the gospel, therefore he saveth. Yet that former interpretation seemeth unto me to be more agreeing, although I do not greatly stand upon that matter. That is more weighty, where some think this righteousness doth not only consist in the free remission of sins, but partly also in the grace of regeneration. But I do understand it, that we are therefore restored into life, because God hath freely reconciled us unto himself; as we shall show more at large afterward in his place. And whereas he said before, to *every one that believeth*, now he saith *from faith*; for righteousness is offered by the gospel, and is received by faith. And he addeth, *to faith*; for, look how much our faith increaseth in us, and how much we have profited in this knowledge, by so much the righteousness of God, together with them, is augmented in us; and, after a sort, the possession thereof is established. As soon as we do taste of the gospel, we see the countenance of God, but afar off, favourable[1] and pleasant towards us: the more that the knowledge of piety groweth in us, as it were by coming nearer, we behold the grace of God more clearly and more familiarly. Whereas, many think there is under these words a secret comparing of the Old with the New Testament, that is more subtle than firm. For Paul doth not here compare the fathers who lived under the law with us, but noteth the daily progress and proceeding[2] in every faithful man.

Righteousness is offered in the gospel, and is received by faith.

As faith and knowledge of the gospel increase, so the righteousness of God increaseth in us.

As it is written. By the authority of the prophet Habakkuk, he proveth this righteousness of faith. For he, when he

[1] "Exporrectam," stretched out. [2] "And proceeding," interpolated by Translator.

Digitized by Google

prophesieth the destruction of the proud, addeth also, that the life of the just consisteth in faith. And we live not in the sight of God but by righteousness; therefore it followeth, that our righteousness also doth depend upon faith. And the verb future noteth the continual perpetuity of that life whereof he speaketh; as if he had said, it is not momentary, but shall endure for ever. For the wicked also are proud through a false opinion of life; but while they say *peace*, and all is well,[1] suddenly destruction cometh upon them. It is therefore but a shadow, which continueth but a moment; and it is faith only which bringeth eternal life. Whence is that, but because faith doth bring us unto God, and settleth our life in him? For, unless this were the meaning of the prophet—that then, and not before, we stand, when by faith we lean upon God—Paul had not aptly applied this testimony. And undoubtedly, he hath not otherwise ascribed the life of the godly unto faith, but so far as, the pride of the world being condemned, they gather themselves under the safeguard of one God. He doth not now upon set purpose handle this cause; and, therefore, he maketh no mention of free righteousness; but even by the nature of faith it is sufficiently apparent, that this testimony is fitly applied unto the present cause.

1 Thess. v. 3.

The life of the wicked is but a shadow.

Furthermore, by this disputation we do necessarily gather the mutual relation between faith and the gospel. For, because it is said, "The just shall live by faith," he inferreth that this life is received by the gospel. Now, we have the state, or principal point[2] of this first part of the Epistle, namely, that by the only mercy of God we are justified.[3] As yet we have not this particularly expressed in the words of Paul; but by the text it will easily appear afterward, that our righteousness, which is grounded upon faith, doth wholly depend upon the mercy of God.

Faith and the gospel have a mutual respect one to the other.

The state of the first part of this Epistle.

18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who withhold the truth in unrighteousness, (or unjustly ;)*

[1] "Pax et securitas," *peace and security.*
[2] "Cardinem," hinge.
[3] "Per fidem," through faith,—omitted.

Digitized by Google

19. *Forasmuch as that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them.*
20. *For the invisible things of him, that is, his eternal power and Godhead, are seen by the creation of the world, being considered in* his *works, to the intent that they should be without excuse:*
21. *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was full of darkness.*
22. *When they professed themselves to be wise, they became fools.*
23. *For they turned the glory of the incorruptible God to the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and of creeping things.*

18. *The wrath of God is revealed.* Now, he argueth from the comparing of contraries, whereby he proveth, that righteousness happeneth not, neither cometh otherwise than by the gospel; for, out of this he showeth all men are condemned; therefore, in it only is salvation to be found. And he bringeth for the first argument of condemnation, that when the frame of the world, and this comely composition of elements, ought to have been a spur unto man, that he should glorify God, no man was found to do his duty; whereby appeareth how all men are guilty of sacrilege, and wicked and abominable ingratitude. Some men think this to be the first proposition or general sentence,[1] that Paul might begin his sermon at repentance; but my mind is, that the disputation beginneth here, and that the state of the cause was set down in the former proposition; for the purpose of Paul is to show where salvation is to be sought for. And he hath already pronounced, that we do not otherwise obtain it than by the gospel. But, because flesh doth not willingly humble itself thus far, that it might assign the praise of salvation to the only grace of God, Paul proveth the whole world to be guilty of eternal death. Whereupon it ensueth, that we must seek for life elsewhere, seeing we are all lost, and utterly cast away[2] in ourselves. Howbeit, the words being diligently weighed, will help greatly to the un-

Out of the gospel all men are condemned.

Seeing all men are guilty of eternal death in themselves, whoso will be saved must seek for life elsewhere.

[1] "Or general sentence," interpolated. [2] "And utterly cast away," interpolated.

Digitized by Google

derstanding of the tenor of the proposition. Some put a difference between impiety and unrighteousness after this sort; by the first word they understand the violating of the worship of God; by the second, the violating of that equity should be amongst men. But, because the Apostle immediately after referreth that unrighteousness unto the neglect of religion, we will understand both as one and the same.

Secondly, All impiety of men; by the figure *hypallage*, for "the impiety of all men," or, whereof all men are guilty. One thing, to wit, unthankfulness against God, is set forth by two names, because we offend therein two ways. It is called Ασεβεια, *id est*, impiety or ungodliness, as a dishonouring of God. It is called Αδικια, *id est*, unrighteousness, or injustice, because man, in taking unto himself that is God's, hath unjustly robbed God of his honour. *Wrath*, an human affection, after the manner of the Scripture, is put for the revengement of God; because God, when he punisheth, seemeth (in our opinion) to be angry. Therefore it doth not signify any motion in God, but only hath respect unto the sense of the sinner that is punished. When he saith that the same *is revealed from heaven*, although this particle, *from heaven*, be taken of some instead of an epitheton, as though it were said, "of the celestial God," yet I think there is more efficacy in it, after this sense; whithersoever a man look about him he shall find no health, for so far and wide as the heavens are, the wrath of God is poured out into the whole world.

Hypallage is, when in speech the order of things is turned.

How God is said to be angry.

The truth of God signifieth the true knowledge of God. To withhold it is to suppress or obscure it; whereby they are, as it were, accused of theft. Where we translate it unjustly, Paul hath, *in unrighteousness;* which phrase of the Hebrews is all one; but we study to be plain.

God's truth is withholden when his true knowledge is suppressed or obscured.

19. *Forasmuch as that which may be known of God.* Thus he termeth that which is lawful or expedient for us to know of God. And he understandeth all that which appertaineth to the setting forth of the glory of the Lord; or (which is all one) whatsoever might move or stir us to glorify God. By which word he signifieth that God cannot be conceived

Digitized by Google

God cannot be known as he is, but only so far as it hath pleased him to make himself known.

of us how great he is; but there is a certain measure within the which men ought to keep themselves; even as God applieth to our capacity whatsoever he testifieth of himself. Those dote, therefore, whosoever they be, who contend to know what God is; because it is not vain that the Spirit, the teacher of true wisdom, doth call us unto το γνωστὸν, to say, *which may be known of God.* And how it may be known he will show straightway in that which followeth. For the greater emphasis, he saith rather *in them*, than simply [to] *them*. For although the apostle doth everywhere use the phrases[1] of the Hebrew tongue, wherein ב [*beth*] is often superfluous, yet here it is thought he would show such a manifestation of God, whereby they might be urged more nearly than that they could make any evasion; as undoubtedly every one of us doth feel it graven in his heart. Whereas he saith,

God hath showed it, the meaning is, that man was therefore made that he might be a beholder of the frame of the world, and that therefore were eyes given unto him, that by the beholding of so goodly a spectacle he might be carried unto the Author himself.

The beholding of God's workmanship in the creation should lead us unto God.

20. *For the invisible things of him.* God by himself is invisible; but because his Majesty shineth in all his works and creatures, men ought in them to acknowledge him; for they do plainly show forth their workmaster. In which respect the Apostle to [in] the Hebrews calleth the world a glass, or spectacle of invisible things. He reckoneth not particularly what things may be considered in God; but he teacheth that we may by that glass come even unto the knowledge of his eternal power and Godhead. For it behoveth him, who is the author of all things, to be without beginning, and of himself. When we are come thither, now the Godhead showeth itself; which cannot consist but with all the virtues of God, seeing they are all comprehended under it.

By the glass of God's creatures we may come even to the knowledge of his eternal power and Godhead.

To the intent that they should be without excuse. Hereby it doth easily appear what men get by this demonstration;

[1] "Phrases," phraseology.

Digitized by Google

namely, that they can allege no excuse before the judgment of God, but they are justly condemned. Let this distinction therefore stand; the demonstration of God, whereby he maketh his glory apparent in his creatures, in respect of the brightness thereof, is clear enough; but in respect of our cæcity[1] is not so sufficient. Yet we are not so blind that we can pretend ignorance, to quit us from the blame of naughtiness or perversity. First, we conceive with ourselves there is a God; secondly,[2] that the same, whosoever he be, is to be worshipped. But here our reason faileth, before it can obtain either who is God, or what he is. Wherefore the Apostle to the Hebrews ascribeth this light unto faith, that a man should profit truly in the creation of the world. And not without cause; for through blindness we are so hindered that we cannot come unto the mark; we see so far that we cannot pretend any excuse. Paul declareth both these things notably, when he saith that God in times past suffered the Gentiles in ignorance; nevertheless, he left not himself without a witness, because he gave unto them rain, and fruitfulness from heaven. Therefore, this knowledge of God, which availeth only to take away excuse, differeth greatly from that knowledge which bringeth salvation, whereof Christ speaketh, and wherein Jeremiah teacheth we are to rejoice.

The revelation of God in his creatures hath a twofold consideration.

Heb. xi. 3.

It is the light of faith whereby we profit aright in the creation of the world.

Acts xiv. 17.

John xvii. 3. Jer. ix. 24.

21. *Because that, when they knew God.* Here he testifieth plainly that God hath put into the minds of all men the knowledge of himself; that is to say, he hath so manifested himself by his works, that needs they must behold that, which of their own accord they seek not after, namely, that there is some God. For neither the world was existent by chance, neither did it come forth of itself. But we must always note in what degree of knowledge they abode in, as now it followeth,

They glorified him not as God. God cannot be conceived without his eternity, power, wisdom, goodness, truth, righteousness, and mercy. His eternity appeareth in this, that he is the Author of all things. His power, that he holdeth all things in his hand, and maketh that they consist in him.

What manner of knowledge was in the Gentiles, namely, an ineffectual.

[1] "Cæcitatem," blindness. [2] "Ratiocinamur," we infer,—omitted.

Digitized by Google

His wisdom, by the most apt disposing of all things. His goodness, because there was none other cause why he should make all things, neither can he be moved by any other reason to conserve them, than for his only goodness. His justice, in the ruling or governing of all things, because he punisheth the guilty, and delivereth the innocent. His mercy, that with so great patience he suffereth the perversity of men. His truth, in this that he is immutable. Therefore, he who hath conceived the knowledge of God, now oweth unto him the glory of eternity, wisdom, goodness, and righteousness. While men do not acknowledge such virtues in God, but dream of him as upon a vain fantasy, they are worthily said to rob him wickedly of his honour. And it is not without cause he addeth,

As we are indebted to God for infinite benefits, so chiefly for that he hath revealed himself unto us.

They were not thankful. For there is no man that is not indebted unto him for the infinity of his benefits. Yea, and if it were in nothing else, even herein hath he sufficiently made us his debtors, that he hath vouchsafed to reveal himself unto us.

All man's sharpness is but vain to understand and serve God aright.

But they became vain, &c. That is to say, having left the truth of God, were turned to the vanity of their own sense, all the quickness or sharpness whereof is but vain, and passeth away like a smoke. And so their foolish mind could understand nothing aright, but by all means was carried headlong into errors and lies. This is that unrighteousness, which by and by choketh through his pravity the seed of true knowledge before it come to perfection.

22. *When they professed.* Out of this place commonly they take an argument, to think that Paul hath here to do with philosophers, who specially challenged unto themselves the praise of wisdom. And they think this to be the course of Paul's disputation, that the excellency of the great doctors being beaten down, it might consequently follow that there was nothing praiseworthy in the common sort of people.

But they seem unto me to have over slender a reason to move them. For this thing was not peculiar unto the philosophers, that they should think themselves wise in the knowledge of God; but it was a thing common to the Gentiles, of

Digitized by Google

what degree or order soever they were. For there was none which would not bring the majesty of God under his capacity, and make God such a one as he could conceive in his own sense. This temerity is not learned (I say) in schools, but being ingrafted[1] in us, doth come together with us (that I may say so) even forth of our mother's womb.

For it is evident that this mischief hath reigned in all ages, that men should take unto themselves all liberty in coining superstitions. This arrogance, therefore, is reprehended, that when men ought in their humility to have given the glory to God, they would be wise in themselves, and pull God down unto their humility; for Paul holdeth this principle fast, that it is his own fault if any man be estranged from the worship of God. As if he should say, because they have proudly lifted up themselves, therefore, through the just vengeance of God, they have been infatuated or made foolish. Concerning that interpretation, which I refuse, my reason is at hand that maketh against it; because this error of feigning an image to God had not his original from the philosophers, but they, having received it of others, with their sentence did approve it.

It hath been a common fault in all ages, that men, trusting to their own wit, have imagined of God and his worship according to their own fantasies.

23. *And they turned.* After they had feigned God to be such a one as they could apprehend by their carnal sense, it was far from them to acknowledge the true God; but they made a feigned and new God, or rather an image in the stead of God. That is it he saith, *They turned the glory of the Lord;* because, like as if a man should suborn, or put a strange child in the place of the natural, so they departed from the true God. Neither doth this pretence excuse them, that yet notwithstanding they believed God dwelt in heaven; and that they counted not the wood for God, but for an image. For even this same is contumelious against God, that they imagined so grossly of his Majesty, that they durst make unto him an image. And from the guiltiness of such presumption no man can be exempted; no, not the priests nor lawgivers; nor philosophers,

It is great contumely against God to imagine so grossly of him, as to resemble him to a mortal, yea, or immortal creature.

[1] "Ingenita," innate.

Digitized by Google

of whom he that was most sober, even Plato himself, seeketh also for a fashion[1] in God. This madness, therefore, is noted, that all would figure God unto themselves, which thing undoubtedly declareth their gross and foolish imaginations of God. And, first, they defiled the Majesty of God with the similitude of corruptible man. For so I had rather turn it, than with Erasmus, *of mortal man;* because Paul doth not only oppose the immortality of God against [to] the mortality of man, but also that glory of his, subject to no corruptions, against [to] the miserable condition of man. Secondly, Not being content with this so great wickedness, they descended even unto beasts, and to those also [that] in their kind were most vile; whereby their sottishness is to be seen more clearly. Of these abominations thou hast with [in] *Lactantius, Eusebius,* and *Augustinus,* in his book, *De Civitate Dei.*

24. *Wherefore also God gave them up to their hearts' lusts, unto uncleanness, to defile their own bodies between themselves.*
25. *Which turned the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature above the Creator, which is blessed for ever. Amen.*
26. *For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.*
27. *And likewise also the men left the natural use of the women, and burned in their lust one toward another, and man with man wrought filthiness, and received in themselves such recompence of their error as was meet.*
28. *For as they regarded not to know God, even so God delivered them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*
29. *Being full of unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, of murder, of debate, of deceit, taking all things in evil part, whisperers,*
30. *Backbiters, haters of God, doers of wrong, proud boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, such as can never be appeased, merciless.*

[1] "Formam," a shape.

Digitized by Google

31. *Which men, though they knew the law of God, how that they which commit such things are worthy of death, yet not only do the same, but also favour them that do them.*

24. *Wherefore also God gave them.* Because impiety is a privy or secret mischief, lest yet they should find some starting hole, by a more sensible demonstration, he showeth that they can no way escape, but they are justly condemned, for because such fruits followed that impiety, as thereby might be gathered evident tokens of the wrath of the Lord. And if so be that the wrath of God be always just, then it followeth that there went somewhat before which made them damnable. From the tokens or signs of God's indignation, he now urgeth the apostacy, and revolting or slipping away of men; for God verily so revengeth those who alienate themselves from his goodness, that he casteth them headlong into manifold perdition and confusion. And comparing the likeliness of the vices wherewithal they were pestered, with that impiety whereof he accused them before, he proveth that they were by the just judgment of God so plagued. For, seeing nothing is more dear unto us than our own honour, this is extreme blindness, when we doubt not to be reproachful unto ourselves; wherefore it is a most convenient punishment for the blasphemy committed against the Majesty of God. He prosecuteth this one thing unto the end of the chapter, but yet he handleth it diversly, because the matter stood in need of great amplification.

Outrageous sinning is a token of God's wrathful indignation, and a just punishment of the abuse of his majesty.

This, therefore, is the sum of that he goeth about, namely, that hereby it doth appear, the ingratitude of men towards God is inexcusable; because by sure testimonies they show forth the fierce wrath of God against them. For they should never have been plunged in so filthy lusts after the manner of beasts, unless the Majesty of God had been marvellously displeased and provoked against them. Wherefore, seeing they everywhere abounded in most detestable abominations, he gathereth that the testimonies of God's wrath were extant in them. Now, if this wrath of God never rage against any timorously[1] or unjustly, but always it holdeth fast the moder-

God's wrath always just.

[1] "Temere," at random.

Digitized by Google

ation of equity; hereby he showeth it is a plain case that no less just than sure destruction hangeth over all men. Of the manner how God doth give men over unto wickedness, it is not necessary I should make any large discourse in this place. For it is certain he doth permit men to fall, not only by suffering and winking at them; but also by his just judgment he so ordaineth it, that they should be led and carried both of their own concupiscence and the devil into such madness. Therefore, he used the word *delivered*, according to the perpetual manner of the Scripture; which word they rack too violently who think we are carried unto sin only by the sufferance of God. For as Satan is the minister of God's wrath, and as it were his tormentor,[1] so he is armed against us not by the dissembling or sufferance, but by the commandment of the judge. And yet is neither God cruel, nor we innocent, seeing Paul declareth plainly, that we are not otherwise delivered under his power than if we have deserved such punishment. This only we except, that the cause of sin cometh not from God, seeing the roots thereof remain still in the sinner. For this must always be true: "Destruction is thine, O Israel; thy help is only in me." When he joineth the lusts of man's heart with uncleanness, privily he giveth us to understand what fruit our heart bringeth forth when it is once left unto itself. This clause "between themselves" hath his emphasis or force, for it expresseth more significantly how deep and incurable notes of infamy they had printed in their bodies.

Satan is the minister of God's wrath.

The roots of sin remain in the sinner.

Hosea xiii. 9.

25. *Which turned.* To the end he might plant it better in their hearts, he repeateth the same reason which he handled above, although not in the same words. While the truth of God is turned into a lie, his glory is stained. They, therefore, deserve justly to be imbrued in all kind of ignominy, who both go about to rob God of his honour, and also to slander or blaspheme him.

And they worshipped. That I might apply two verbs to one construction, I have thus translated it. He properly

[1] "Carnifer," executioner.

Digitized by Google

noteth the sin of idolatry; for honour cannot be given for religion's sake unto the creature, but it shall be unworthily, and by the way of sacrilege, taken from God. In vain is the excuse, that images are worshipped for God's sake, seeing God acknowledgeth not this worship, neither doth he account it acceptable to him. And then the true God is not worshipped at all, but a feigned God which flesh hath devised unto itself. And that which is added, "who is blessed for ever, amen," I interpret to be spoken to the greater reproach of the idolaters, after this sense, "whom only they ought to have honoured and worshipped, and from whom they ought to have derogated nothing, though it were but a little."[1]

What honour for religion's sake is given to the creature, the same is unjustly taken from God.

26. *For this cause God gave them up.* As though he had interposed a parenthesis, he returneth unto that which he had begun before concerning the revengement of the Lord; and he bringeth the first example, in the horrible sin of preposterous lust; whereby appeareth they were not only given over to beastly lusts, but also became worse than beasts, when they overthrew the whole order of nature. *Secondly*, He reckoneth a great catalogue of vices which have both been extant in all ages, and at that time reigned every where most licentiously. Neither hindereth this one whit, that every one was not laden with such a heap of vices; for in reproving the general corruption of men, it is sufficient if every one[2] be compelled to acknowledge some mole or blemish.

Thus, therefore, it is to be taken that Paul doth here briefly touch those vices, which both were common in all ages, and also were specially to be seen in that age. For it is marvellous how common that filthiness was which the brute beasts abhor; as for the other vices, they were vulgar. *Secondly*, That he reciteth such a catalogue of vices as all mankind is comprehended in it. For although all men be not murderers, or thieves, or adulterers, yet there is no man that is not found to be polluted with some vice.

Though all men be not thieves or murderers, &c., yet every man is polluted with some vice.

[1] "Vel minimum," even the least.

[2] "Ad unum omnes," all to a man.

Digitized by Google

Unto vile affections. He calleth those vile affections which even in the opinion of men are most vile or shameful, and serve to the dishonour of God.

27. *And received in themselves such recompence of their error.* For they who, of their own malignity, closed their eyes against the offered light of God, that they might not see his glory, deserved to be blinded, that they might forget themselves, and not see what were convenient for them. Moreover, they deserved to have their sight dimmed at noonday, who were not ashamed (as much as in them was) to extinguish the glory of God, which only doth lighten us.

In the judgments of God there is a proportion between the sin and the punishment.

28. *As they regarded not to know God.* In these words we are to observe a resemblance or comparison, which notably showeth the equal relation of the sin and the punishment. Because they regarded not to abide in the knowledge of God, which only directeth our minds unto true wisdom, the Lord gave unto them a perverse mind, which now can allow of nothing.[1] Whereas he saith, they *approved not*, it is as much as if he should say, they followed not the knowledge of God with such study as they ought, but rather purposely they turned their cogitation from God: he signifieth, therefore, that, through their wicked election, they preferred their own vanities before God; and so that error wherewith they were deceived was voluntary.

To do those things which are not convenient. Because hitherto he hath mentioned only that one execrable example, which, though it were common amongst many, yet it was not common unto all, he beginneth to reckon such vices as no man could be found to be free of. For, albeit (as it is said) they appear not all at once in every one, yet all men know themselves to be guilty of some of them, that every man for his own part might be reproved of manifest pravity. First of all, whereas he calleth them *not convenient*, understand that they abhorred[2] from all judgment of reason, and were far from the duties of men. For he declareth the tokens of a con-

[1] "Nihil jam probare," now provo nothing.

[2] "Abhorrentia," were abhorrent to.

Digitized by Google

founded[1] mind, that, without all difference, men addicted themselves to those vices which common sense ought to have refused.

Moreover, they labour in vain which go about to reduce these vices into an order, that one might be drawn out of another; seeing that was not the purpose of Paul, but to set them down as every one came first to his remembrance. What every of them signifieth, let us briefly run over them. Understand injustice, when the right of humanity is violated amongst men, in not giving to every one that is his; πονηρίαν, according to the sentence of Ammonius, I have turned lewdness, or ungraciousness. For he teacheth πονηρον, *id est*, a lewd, naughty, or ungracious fellow, to be δραστικον κακου, *id est*, a doer, or worker of mischief. Lewdness, therefore, or ungraciousness, is a practised or exercised kind of wickedness, or a more loose license of committing naughtiness. As for maliciousness, it is that pravity and crookedness of the mind which striveth to do harm to our neighbours. Where Paul hath the word πορνειαν, I have put this word lust; yet I am not against it, if any man had rather translate it fornication; for it signifieth as well the inward lust as the external action. The words covetousness, envy, and murder, have no doubtful signification. Under strife or contention he comprehendeth as well brawlings as fightings, and seditious motions, κακοηθια, for the which we have put down *perversity*, to say, famous and notable lewdness; when a man, by custom and an evil use, is hardened in corrupt manners: θεοστυγεις are, no doubt, haters of God. For there is no reason why it should be here put passively, (that is, hated of God,)[2] seeing Paul, in this place, goeth about, by evident vices, to prove the guiltiness of men. Those, therefore, are noted which hate God, whose righteousness they seem to gainstand with their wickedness.

Whisperers and backbiters are thus distinguished: that those, namely, *whisperers*, do by privy accusation break the friendship of good men, inflame their minds to hatred, defame the innocent, and sow discord, &c.; these, to say,

[1] "Inversæ," perverted. [2] Parenthesis by Translator.

Digitized by Google

backbiters, through a certain ingrafted malignity, spare the name of no man; and, as though they were vexed with the frenzy of evil speaking, they slander together both those [who] have deserved, and those [who] have not. I have translated ὑβριστας, evil-doers, because the Latin authors are wont to call notable injuries, as are robberies, thefts, burnings, witchcrafts, which Paul would note in this place, by the name of evil deeds. I call those contumelious whom Paul calleth ὑπερηφανους, for so the Greek word signifieth. Hence cometh the name, because such being, as it were, set on high, contemptuously despise the lower sort, neither can they abide any equality. Those are proud or haughty who do swell with the vain wind of superiority. Those are called insociable, (or such as will not be kept in the duty of civil obedience and fellowship,)[1] who, through iniquities, revolt from the conserving of man's society, or in whom there is no sincerity or constancy of faith, as though you should say truce-breakers.

Without natural affection, who have put off even the first affections of nature towards theirs. Because he putteth the defect of mercy amongst the tokens of man's corrupted nature, hereupon Augustine gathereth against the Stoics, that mercy is a Christian virtue.

Who, when they knew the righteousness of God. And albeit this place is diversly handled, yet this doth seem to me the truest interpretation: that men have left nothing [that] might serve unto the unbridled licentiousness of sinning, because all difference of good and evil being taken away, they approved, both in themselves and others, those things they knew displeased God, and, by just judgment, were condemned[2] of him.

To flatter ourselves in sin, and to be so far past shame of sin, that we defend unrighteousness against the justice of God, is the top of all mischief. Prov. ii. 14.

For this is the head of all mischief, when as the sinner is so past all shame, that he both flattereth his own sins, neither will he have it disliked in him, and also, by his consent and cockering,[3] doth nourish them in others. So is desperate wickedness described in the Scripture; "they glory in it when they have done evil." *Item*, "she hath spread her feet

[1] Parenthesis by Translator. [2] "Damnatum iri," will be condemned.
[3] "Suffragiis applausuque," by his suffrage and applause.

Digitized by Google

abroad, and gloried in her wickedness." For he who is yet ashamed is curable;[1] but when, through the custom of sinning, such impudence is contracted, that vices please, and are counted instead of virtues, there is no hope of amendment. And therefore I expound it thus, for that I see the Apostle in this place goeth about to reprove something [that] was more grievous and abominable than the committing of the vices. What that should be I know not, unless we refer it to that sum of wickedness, when miserable men, having cast off the shame of sin, take upon them to defend their unrighteousness against the justice of God. Ezek. xvi. 25. Jer. xl. 15.

CHAPTER II.

1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for in that thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.*
2. *But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.*

THIS reprehension concerneth hypocrites; who, while they blear the eyes of men with the shows of external holiness, think themselves also to be safe before God, as though they had sufficiently discharged all their duty towards him. Paul, therefore, after he had shown the grosser faults, lest he should leave any for just before God, invadeth this kind of saints, which could not be comprehended in the first catalogue. Hypocrites, if they can satisfy the eyes of men, they think all is well.

Now, the conveyance[2] is plainer and easier, than that any ought to marvel whence the Apostle gathereth this reason. He therefore maketh them inexcusable, because they themselves knew the judgment of God, and yet, nevertheless, transgressed the law, as though he should say, albeit thou dost not consent to the vices of others, yea, dost seem pur-

[1] "Pudet, is adhuc est sanabilis," is ashamed, is yet curable.
[2] "Deductio," inference.

Digitized by Google

posely to be an enemy, and revenger of vices, yet because, if thou dost truly examine thyself, thou art not free from them, thou canst not pretend any defence.

For in that thou judgest another. Besides the notable resemblance, or mutual respect of the Greek words, Κρίνων καὶ κατακρίνεις, the exaggeration which he useth against them is to be noted. For the phrase, or manner of speech, availeth as much, as if he should say, thou art twice damnable who art guilty of the same vices which thou reprovest and accusest in others. For it is a known sentence, that they which ask an account of another of his life, do denounce[1] the law of uprightness, continence, and all other virtues, to themselves; neither are they worthy of any forgiveness if they commit the same which they took upon them to correct in another. *For thou, judging, dost even the same.* So it is word for word, (which you may turn thus, *for thou that judgest another dost the same things.*)[2] Moreover, the meaning is, notwithstanding thou judgest them, yet thou dost them. And he saith, they did them because they were not of a right mind; seeing sin properly is of the mind, therefore in this they condemn themselves, because, whilst they reprove a thief, an adulterer, or an evil-speaker, they pronounce not judgment against the persons, but against the vices which stick even in their own bones.

They are twice damnable that are guilty of the same faults they reprove in others.

2. *We know that the judgment of God, &c.* The purpose of Paul is to shake hypocrites out of their flatterings, lest they should think they had gotten some great thing, if either they were praised of the world, or else were clear in their own sight; because there abideth for them a far other judgment in heaven.

Hypocrites shall not be tried by their own judgment.

Furthermore, because he accuseth them of internal impurity, which, inasmuch as it is hidden from the eyes of men, and cannot be reproved nor convicted by human testimonies, he provoketh[3] them to the judgment of God, to whom the darkness itself is not secret, and with the sense whereof sinners, will they nill they, must needs be touched. Finally,

[1] "Indicere," declare. [2] Parenthesis by Translator. [3] "Provocat," he appeals.

Digitized by Google

the truth of this judgment consisteth in two things: first, that without respect of persons he will punish sin, in what man soever he findeth it; secondly, that he standeth not upon the outward appearance, neither careth he for the work itself, unless it proceed from a true and sincere mind. Whereupon it followeth, that the visard of counterfeit holiness letteth not, but by his judgment he may take vengeance even upon the secret wickedness. And it is an Hebrew phrase, for *verity* is oftentimes as much with the Hebrews as the inward integrity of the heart; and so it is opposed not only against gross lying, but also against the external show of good works. For then at the last are hypocrites roused, when it is said, that God shall not only take judgment upon their counterfeit righteousness, but also upon their secret affections.

The truth of God's judgments consisteth in two things.

3. *And thinkest thou, O thou man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?*
4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his bountifulness, and patience, and long-sufferance, not knowing that the bountifulness of God leadeth thee unto repentance?*
5. *But thou, after thy hardness, and heart that cannot repent, heapest unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and of the declaration of the just judgment of God;*
6. *Who will reward every man according to his works:*
7. *To them which by continuance in well-doing seek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life:*
8. *But unto them which are contentious, and disobey the truth, and obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,*
9. *Tribulation and anguish, upon the soul of every man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Grecian.*
10. *But to every man that doeth good, glory, and honour, and peace, to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian.*

3. *And thinkest thou, O thou man, &c.* Because the rhetoricians do charge that a man should not descend unto more vehement reprehension before the crime be manifestly proved, Paul may be thought of some foolishly to rise up against them here, who as yet not having fully accomplished that accusation which he intendeth, is carried so fiercely against them. But the matter is otherwise. For by suf-

Digitized by Google

ficient proof they were convicted to be guilty of sin; seeing he accused them not before men, but accused them by the judgment of their conscience. And by this he counted that undoubtedly to be proved which he went about, namely, that if they descended into themselves, and admitted the examination of God's judgment, they could not deny their iniquity. Neither is that without great need that with such severity and sharpness he reproveth this counterfeit holiness. For this sort of men with wonderful security trust in themselves, unless this vain confidence be violently shaken from them. Let us remember, therefore, that this is the best way to convince hypocrisy, if it be awaked from his drunkenness, and drawn into the light of God's judgment.

Hypocrites must be sharply reproved, else they will not awake out of their security.

That thou shalt escape. The argument is drawn from the lesser. For if wicked deeds must be subject to the judgment of man, much more to the judgment of God, who is the only Judge of all things. It is verily through an heavenly instinct that men are carried to condemn wickedness, but this is only an obscure and small shadow of his judgment. They, therefore, who will not let others escape their judgment, are greatly deceived to think they can escape God's judgment. Neither is it without special force that he expresseth again the name of man, that he might compare man with God.

4. *Or despisest thou the riches, &c.* I do not think with many that there is here a *dilemma*, but a *preoccupation*.[1] For because hypocrites for the most part are puffed up with the prosperous success of things, as though by their good works they had merited the clemency of the Lord, and so they are more hardened in the contempt of God; the apostle meeteth with their arrogance, and by an argument taken from the contrary cause, he showeth there is nothing should move them to think by reason of their external prosperity that God is pleased with them, seeing the purpose of God in doing good is far otherwise, namely, that he might convert sinners unto him. Therefore, where the fear of God reigneth

Dilemma is an argument that convinceth every way.

[1] "Prolepsis," anticipation.

Digitized by Google

not, security in prosperous affairs is a contempt and mockery of his incomprehensible goodness. Whereupon it ensueth, that they shall suffer more grievous punishments whom God hath spared in this life, because unto their other wickedness this hath been added, that they have refused the fatherly calling of God. And although all the benefits of God are so many testimonies of his fatherly goodness, yet because he often respecteth a divers end, the godless do wickedly to flatter themselves in their prosperity as though they were beloved of him, whilst he nourishest them tenderly and bountifully.

Without the fear of God, security in prosperity is a contempt of God's goodness.

Not knowing that the bountifulness, &c. For God by his lenity declareth himself unto us, that it is he unto whom we ought to be converted, if we desire to be well; and together[1] he cheereth up the confidence of looking for mercy. If we use not the bountifulness of God to this end, we abuse it; although it is not always to be taken after the same manner. For whilst the Lord doth deal favourably with his servants, and bless them with earthly blessings, by such testimonies he declareth his benevolence, and also teacheth them to seek for the sum of all good things in him.[2] Whilst he dealeth with the transgressors of the law in the same sort, by his bountifulness he goeth about to mollify their stubbornness; and yet he declareth not himself to be pleased with them, but rather calleth them to repentance. And if any object that the Lord singeth unto deaf men so long as he doth not inwardly touch the heart, it is to be answered, that nothing can be blamed here but our pravity. Moreover, in the words of Paul, I had rather say he leadeth than he inviteth, because that is more significant. And yet, notwithstanding, I do not take it for to drive or force, but for to lead by the hand.

Diversity between the end why God bestoweth his blessings upon the godly and godless.

Objection.

Answer.

5. *But thou, after thine hardness, &c.* When we are once hardened against the admonitions of the Lord, impenitence doth follow; and those who have no care to repent, do manifestly tempt the Lord. This is a notable place, where we

[1] "Simul," at the same time.

[2] "Uno," alone, omitted.

Digitized by Google

are to learn, as I touched before, that the wicked do not only, so long as they live here, daily more and more heap up the wrath of God against them; but also, that it shall serve to their condemnation whatsoever of the gifts of God they use continually. For they shall give account of all; and then shall appear, that it shall be imputed unto them for extreme wickedness, that through the bountifulness of God, whereby they should have been bettered, they were made worse. Let us, therefore, take heed lest, by the unlawful abuse of good things, we lay up for ourselves this unhappy treasure.

Even those things which by their own nature are good, serve to the destruction of the wicked.

In the day of wrath. So it is word for word; but for Εἰς Ἡμέραν, against the day, or into the day. For the godless now gather against themselves the indignation of God, the force whereof shall then pour itself upon their head; they heap up secret destruction, which then shall be taken out of the treasures of God. The day of the last judgment is called the day of wrath so long as the speech concerneth the wicked; for to the faithful it is the day of redemption. So likewise are all other visitations of the Lord always set forth in horrible and fearful manner against the wicked; but, on the contrary, sweet and pleasant to the godly.

The day of judgment is the day of wrath to the wicked, but the day of redemption to the godly.

Therefore, as often as the Scripture maketh mention of the nearness of the Lord, it biddeth the godly rejoice and be glad; and while it respecteth the reprobate,[1] it doth nothing else but smite with terror and fear. That day, saith Sophonye,[2] shall be a day of wrath, a day of tribulation and anguish, a day of obscurity and darkness, a day of clouds and blackness. The like you have in Joel. And Amos also crieth out, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord; what have you to do with it? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light." Moreover, when Paul addeth the word "declaration," he giveth to understand what day of wrath that is, namely, when the Lord shall make his judgment known; of which judgment, albeit he daily gives certain tokens, yet he conserveth[3] and keepeth the clear and full declaration thereof unto that day. For then shall the books

Zeph. i. 15.

Joel ii. 2.

Amos v. 18.

The clear manifestation of God's judgment reserved till the last day.

[1] "Dum autem ad reprobos se convertit," but when it turneth to the reprobate. [2] Zephaniah. [3] "Suspendit," suspendeth.

Digitized by Google

be opened, then shall the lambs be separated from the goats, and then shall the corn be purged from the tares.

6. *Who shall give to every man, &c.* Because he [Paul] hath to do with blind saints,[1] who think the wickedness of the heart to be well covered, so that it be spread over with certain (I know not what) shows of vain works, he setteth down true righteousness of works, which shall have place before God, lest they should think it were sufficient to please him, if they brought words and trifles only, or leaves. Moreover, there is no such difficulty in this sentence as commonly there is thought to be. For if God by just revengement shall punish the wickedness of the reprobate, he shall recompense them that [what] they have deserved. Again, because he sanctifieth them whom, in time to come,[2] he purposeth to glorify, in them also he will crown good works, but not according to merit. For that cannot be proved by this sentence, which sentence, although it show what reward good works shall have, yet, notwithstanding, it showeth not what (they merit,)[3] are worth, (or deserve,) nor yet what reward is due unto them. It is a foolish sequel[4] to prove merit by the reward.

God, in condemning the reprobate, payeth them that they have deserved.

Good works crowned, but not according to merit; for merit is not proved by the reward.

7. *To them truly which, according to perseverance.* Word for word[5] it is *patience*, by which word there is somewhat more expressed. For *perseverance* is, when one constantly abideth in well-doing without weariness; *patience* also is required in the saints, whereby, although they are oppressed with divers temptations, yet they faint not. For Satan suffereth them not with free passage to come unto the Lord; but laboureth by innumerable offences to hinder them, and turn them out of the right way. And whereas he saith, that the faithful, by persisting in good works, do seek glory and honour, his meaning is, not that they aspire any whither than unto the Lord, or to seek any thing above him, or more excellent than he; but they cannot seek him, but also they must contend[6] to come unto the blessedness of his kingdom;

Satan interrupteth the course of godliness.

[1] "Sanctulis," saintlings. [2] "Olim," one day. [3] Parentheses interpolated. [4] "Stulta consequentia," foolish inference. [5] "Ad verbum," literally. [6] "Quin simul...contendant," without at the same time striving.

Digitized by Google

The Lord giveth eternal life unto them who, by well-doing, meditate upon immortality.

a description whereof is contained under the circumlocution of these words. The meaning, therefore, is, that the Lord will give unto those eternal life, who, studying to do good works, meditate upon immortality.

8. *But to those* [that] *are contentious.* The speech is somewhat confused. *First*, Because the tenor (form or fashion) of the talk is broken. For the course of speech required that the second part of comparison should cleave unto the first after this sort, the Lord will give eternal life to those who, by perseverance in good works, seek glory, honour, and immortality; but to the contentious and disobedient, eternal death. Then should be added the illation or conclusion, namely, that there is prepared for those glory, honour, and incorruption; but for these there is laid up wrath and affliction. *Secondly*, Because these words, indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish, are applied unto two divers members, yet this troubleth not the sense of the speech, which [sense] ought to suffice us in the writings of the Apostles. For out of others[1] we must seek for eloquence; here is spiritual wisdom to be sought for under a base and simple style of words. Contention here is put for rebellion and stiff-neckedness, because Paul hath to do with hypocrites, who, through gross and reckless cockering, make a mockery of God. Under the name of truth is simply understood the rule of God's will, which is the only lantern of truth. For this is a common thing to all the wicked, that they had rather subject themselves in service to iniquity, than take upon them the yoke of God. And what obedience soever they pretend, yet they cease not stubbornly to murmur, and strive against the Word of God. For as they which are openly wicked scoff at this truth, so the hypocrites doubt not to oppose their counterfeit servings and worshippings against it. Moreover, the Apostle hereby putteth in mind that such stubborn people do serve iniquity; for there is no mean whereby they should not presently fall into the servitude of sin, who will not be ruled by the law of the Lord. And this also is a just reward of fran-

In the Scriptures we must seek for spiritual wisdom, and not for eloquence.

Between the service of God and sin there is no mean, so that if we serve not God, then do we serve sin.

[1] "Ex aliis," in other writings.

Digitized by Google

tic licentiousness, that they are made the bond-slaves of sin, who thought it much to obey God.

Indignation and wrath. The property of the words hath caused me to turn it thus: For θυμος with the Grecians signifieth that which Cicero teacheth *excandescentiam* to note with the Latins, namely, a sudden inflammation of wrath. In the others I follow Erasmus. And note that of the four which are reckoned, the two latter are, as it were, effects of the former. For they which perceive or feel God to be against them, and angry with them, forthwith are confounded. Nevertheless, when he might briefly, in two words, have showed as well the blessedness of the godly, as the destruction of the reprobate, he amplifieth them both in many words; to the end he might better and more effectually move men with the fear of God's wrath, and stir up the desire of obtaining grace by Christ. For we never fear the judgment of God sufficiently, unless it be, by a lively description, as it were set before our eyes. Neither do we seriously burn with the desire of the life to come, except we be stirred up by many provokements. Tusc. Quæst. iv.

9. *To the Jew first.* I doubt not, but he simply opposeth the Gentile to the Jew; for whom he now calleth Grecians, straightway he calleth[1] the same Gentiles. And the Jews are first in the action of this cause,[2] for that they specially had the promises and threatenings of the law, as if he should say, this is the universal law of God's judgment, which shall begin at the Jews, and comprehend the whole world.

11. *For there is no respect of persons with God.*
12. *Whosoever have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and whoso have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.*
13. *For not the hearers of the law are righteous before God; but the doers of the law shall be justified.*

11. *For there is no respect of persons.* Hitherto he hath drawn all men generally guilty unto judgment; now, he

[1] "Mox dicet," he will by and by call. [2] "In hujus causæ actione præcedunt," in the pleading of this cause take the lead.

Digitized by Google

beginneth here to reprove the Jews by themselves, and the Gentiles by themselves: And withal, he teacheth that that diversity or difference which separateth the one from the other letteth not, but both of them without difference may be subject to eternal death. The Gentiles pretended excuse by ignorance; the Jews gloried in the title of the law; from the Gentiles he taketh all excuse and hafting,[1] and the Jews he spoileth of their false and vain boasting. It is, therefore, a certain division or distribution of all mankind into two members. For God had severed the Jews from other nations; and as for all other nations, they were in one and the like case. Now, he showeth that that diversity hindereth nothing, whereby they should not both be entangled and wrapped in the same guiltiness. But the word *person* is used in the Scripture for all external things, which are wont to be had in any price or estimation. When thou readest, therefore, that God is no accepter of persons, understand, that he respecteth the purity and inward innocence of the heart, and regardeth not those things which men make great reckoning of: namely, kindred, country, dignity, riches, and such like; so that acception ["respect"] is here taken for an election, or separation of one nation from another, (or between nation and nation.) And if any hereupon do cavil, that the election of God therefore is not free, it may be answered, that there is a twofold acception of man before God. The first, whereby, of his mere goodness, he chooseth us, being called from nothing; seeing there is nothing in our nature that might be liked of him. The second, whereby, when he hath regenerated us, he also embraceth us with his gifts, (that are in us,)[2] and loveth[3] that image of his Son which he doth acknowledge in us.

By person is meant whatsoever external thing the world esteemeth. Deut. x. 17.

A twofold acception of man before God.

12. *Whosoever have sinned without law.* In the former part of his division he setteth upon the Gentiles, to whom, albeit there was no Moses given which might publish[4] unto them the law from the Lord; yet he denieth that to hinder any whit, whereby they might not by sinning bring upon themselves the just judgment of death; as if he should say, the

[1] "Tergiversationem." [2] Parenthesis interpolated. [3] "Suo favore prosequitur," visits with his favour. [4] "Ac sanciret," and confirm.

Digitized by Google

knowledge of the written law is not necessary to the just condemnation of a sinner. See, therefore, what kind of supportation[1] (maintenance or bearing out) they have taken upon them, who, through preposterous pity, under the pretence of ignorance, go about to exempt the Gentiles, deprived of the light of the gospel, from the judgment of God.

The knowledge of the written law is not necessary to the just condemnation of a sinner.

Whoso have sinned in the law. As the Gentiles, while they are carried with the errors of their own sense, run headlong in perdition, so the Jews have the law at hand, whereby they are judged. For the sentence was pronounced long ago, "Cursed are all those which abide not in all the precepts thereof." Therefore, the sinful Jews are in worse case, whose damnation is already in their law.

Deut. xxvii. 26.

13. *For not the hearers of the law.* This is a *preoccupation*, [prolepsis,] whereby he preventeth that exception which the Jews might allege. Because they heard that the law was the rule of righteousness, they were proud of the bare knowledge thereof. Which fallacy or deception that he might refell, he denieth that the hearing or knowledge of the law hath any such weight, that any should pretend righteousness thereby; but the works must be brought forth, according to that saying, "He that doeth these things shall live in them." Therefore, this present sentence availeth thus much,—"If righteousness be sought for by the law, then must needs the law be fulfilled; because the righteousness of the law consisteth in the perfection of the works." They who abuse this place to build or maintain the justification of works, are worthy to be laughed to scorn of children; therefore, it were to no purpose, and also besides the matter, here to thrust in a long discourse of justification for the unfolding of so frivolous a cavillation; for the apostle only urgeth that upon the Jews which he had mentioned before, namely, the judgment of the law, that they could not be justified by the law, except they fulfilled the law. If they transgressed it, then was the curse already prepared for them.

Deut. iv. 1.

They only are justified by the law which fulfil the law; but none, &c., therefore none are justified by the law.

We deny not but perfect righteousness is prescribed in the law; but because all men are convicted of transgression,

[1] "Patrocinium," patronage, advocacy.

Digitized by Google

we say that righteousness must be sought elsewhere; rather we argue out of this place, that no man is justified by works; for if they only which fulfil the law be justified by the law, it followeth that none is justified, because that none is found that can boast of the fulfilling of the law.

14. *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, they, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:*
15. *Which show the effect of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing one another, or excusing;*
16. *At the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

14. *For when the Gentiles.* Now he repeateth the proof of the former member; for he thought it not sufficient to condemn us by word, and to pronounce the just judgment of God against us; but he goeth about by reasons to convince the same unto us, to the end he might the more stir us unto the desire and love of Christ. For he proveth that ignorance is in vain pretended of the Gentiles, seeing by their deeds they declared themselves to have no small[1] rule of righteousness; for no people did ever at any time so abhor from humanity, that they kept not themselves within some laws. Inasmuch, therefore, as all the Gentiles voluntarily, and of themselves,[2] are inclined to make laws unto themselves, it is out of all question that there are naturally grafted in the minds of all men certain conceptions of justice and uprightness, which the Grecians call προλήψεις, cogitations, or devices. They have, therefore, a law without the law; because, howsoever they have not the written law of Moses, yet they are not altogether void of the knowledge of right and equity; for otherwise they could not discern between vice and virtue; the one whereof they restrained by punishments, the other they commended, and being approved of them, they honoured with rewards. He hath opposed nature to the written law; meaning that there appeared in the Gentiles a natural light

There is ingraffed naturally in the minds of all men a certain conception of justice.

[1] "Nonnullam," some. [2] "Sine monitore," without a monitor.

Digitized by Google

of justice which did supply the place of the law, whereby the Jews were taught, so that they were a law unto themselves.

15. *Which show the effect of the law, &c.* That is to say, they testify that there is graven in their hearts a certain discretion[1] and judgment, whereby they discern between right and wrong, honest and unhonest. For he meaneth not that it was printed in their will that they should covet, and studiously seek after it; but because they were so overcome of the virtue of truth,[2] that they could not but (needs they must) approve it, for why should they institute religions, but because they judge that God is to be worshipped? why should they be ashamed of adultery and theft, but that they think them both evil? Unadvisedly, therefore, is the power of our will drawn out of this place, as though Paul should say, the observation of the law were subject to our power, seeing he speaketh not of the power of fulfilling the law, but of knowledge. Neither is this word *heart* taken for the seat of the affections, but for the intellect only, or understanding, as Deut., "The Lord hath not given thee a heart to understand." Also in another place, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe."

Paul speaketh not of the keeping, but of the knowledge of the law.

Heart, for the intellect or understanding.

Deut. xxix. 4.

Luke xxiv. 25.

Furthermore, neither is it hereby to be gathered, that there is in men a full knowledge of the law, but only that there are certain seeds of justice abiding[3] in their wit; such as these be, that all Gentiles, indifferently instituted religions, by laws punish adultery, thefts, and murder; that they commend a good faith in bargains and contracts. For so they declare how they are not ignorant that God is to be worshipped; adultery, theft, and murder, are evil, and honesty is commendable. Neither is it material what kind of god they imagine to be, or how many gods they make; it is sufficient that they understand there is a God, and that the same is to be honoured and worshipped. It forceth not whether they permit the concupiscence of an-

Imperfect knowledge in the Gentiles.

[1] "Discrimen," discernment. [2] "Veritatis potentia," by the power of truth. [3] "Indita," implanted.

Digitized by Google

other man's wife and possession, or any other thing; whether they can bridle the affections of wrath and hatred; for that which they knew was evil for them to do, the same was not lawful for them to covet.

Their own conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts, &c. He could not have urged them more straitly than with the testimony of their own conscience, which is instead of a thousand witnesses. By the conscience of good deeds men support and comfort themselves; they who, in their conscience, know they have done evil, are tormented and troubled in themselves. Whence these speeches of the Ethnics came, A good conscience is a large and noble theatre; but an evil is a most vile tormentor, and more cruelly driveth the wicked from post to pillar than any fury of hell. There is, therefore, a certain natural knowledge of the law, which showeth this to be good, and to be followed after, and that to be abhorred. And mark how notably he describeth the conscience, when he saith the reasons come into our mind whereby we defend that is well done; again, which accuse and reprove us of those things are evil done. And these reasons of accusing and defending he deferreth unto the day of the Lord; not as though they shall then first appear, for they do continually even in this life urge us, and exercise their office; but because they shall then also prevail, lest any should contemn them as frivolous, and such as did vanish away. And he hath put *in the day* for *unto the day;* as he did before.

As there is nothing more comfortable than the testimony of a good conscience, so, on the contrary, nothing more horrible than the testimony of an evil conscience.

16. *Wherein God shall judge the secrets of men.* It is a very apt description of the judgment, serving for the present place; that they might know, which willingly hide themselves in the darkness of unsensibleness, or dulness of mind, that those inward cogitations, which now are altogether hid in the depth of their hearts, shall then come forth into light. As in another place, whiles he will show unto the Corinthians of how small force man's judgment is, which consisteth in external shows; he biddeth them tarry till the Lord come, "who will lighten the secrets of darkness, and open the hid-

Digitized by Google

den things of the heart." Which things when we hear, let us remember that we are admonished, if we will be indeed approved of our Judge, that then we study to come unto that sincerity of mind. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

He addeth, *according to my gospel,* signifying that he pronounceth such doctrine, as even man's reason, naturally grafted in him, doth yield unto. And he calleth it his gospel, in respect of his ministry. For otherwise, God only hath authority to give the gospel; only the dispensation is committed to the apostles. Moreover, it is no marvel though part of the gospel be called the messenger and solemn publishing of the judgment to come; for if the effect and accomplishment of those things he promiseth be deferred until the full declaration of the celestial kingdom, it must needs be conjoined with the last judgment. Again, Christ cannot be preached but to the rising of some, and the fall of other some, both which appertain unto the day of judgment. Concerning this parcel *by Jesus Christ,* although it seem otherwise to some, yet I refer it unto the judgment, after this manner, that the Lord shall execute his judgment by Christ; for he is appointed of the Father to be judge of the quick and the dead. Which the apostles always count amongst the chiefest points of the gospel; and so the sentence shall be more perfect, which otherwise should be lame.

How the gospel is called the gospel of Paul.

God will execute his judgment by Christ.

17. *Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and gloriest in God,*
18. *And knowest his will, and allowest the things that are excellent, in that thou art instructed by the law;*
19. *And persuadest thyself that thou art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,*
20. *An instructor of them which lack discretion, a teacher of the unlearned, which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth of the law.*
21. *Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?*
22. *Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, committest thou sacrilege?*

Digitized by Google

23. *Thou that gloriest in the law, through breaking the law, dishonourest thou God?*
24. *For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.*

17. *Behold, thou art a Jew.* In certain old copies is read Ειδε, if verily; which, if it were so much received,[1] should be more allowed of me. But because the greatest part of books[2] is against it, and the sense may stand otherwise, I keep the old reading, especially seeing it is but a small matter of one particle. Now, therefore, having dispatched the cause of the Gentiles, he returneth unto the Jews; and to the end he might more vehemently beat down all their vanity, he granteth unto them all those things wherewithal they were proud and puffed up. Secondly, He showeth how little they serve to vain glory;[3] yea, rather how greatly they serve to their reproach. Under the name of Jew he comprehendeth all the prerogatives of that nation, which, being taken from the law and the prophets, they did falsely pretend, and so he understandeth all the Israelites, who were at that time all of them indifferently called Jews

Antiquities, Book xi.

Furthermore, it is uncertain when that name first began; but that undoubtedly it began after the dispersion. Josephus thinketh that it was taken up of Judas Machabeus; by whose conducts and dispositions[4] the liberty and dignity of the people, when it had been a long time fallen, and almost buried, revived again. Albeit I see this sentence[5] is probable, yet, if there be any whom it satisfieth not, I will bring also of myself another conjecture. It seemeth verily unto me to be like, that when they were so wasted and scattered,[6] they could not conserve any certain distinction of tribes; for neither could the cessing, valuing, or mustering of the people be done in season; neither did the policy or decent form of governing their commonwealth stand, (which was necessary for conserving such order;) they both dwelt, dispersed, and scattered out of

[1] "Tam receptum," as generally received. [2] "Codicum," manuscripts. [3] "Veram gloriam," true glory. [4] "Cujus auspiciis," under whose auspices. [5] "Sententiam," opinion. [6] "Tot cladibus," by so many disasters, omitted.

Digitized by Google

order, and also being worn with adversities, they were not so careful for the reckoning of their kindred. But howsoever you will not grant these things unto me,[1] yet you cannot deny but there was likelihood of such danger, in such disturbance of things. Whether, therefore, they would foresee that was to come,[2] or they would solve the present evil, I think they altogether went unto[3] the name of that tribe, wherein purity of religion had abidden longest, which tribe, by singular prerogative, excelled all the rest, and out of the which they looked for the Redeemer to come; for this was their refuge in extremities, to comfort themselves with looking for the Messias. Howsoever it be, under the name of Jews, they professed themselves to be the heirs of the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed.

When and whence the Israelites were called Jews.

And restest in the law, and gloriest in God. He meaneth not that they rested in the study of the law, as though they applied their mind to the keeping of it; but rather he upbraideth them, that they, not considering to what end the law was given, having left the care of keeping it, were proud of this one thing, because they were persuaded that the oracles of God appertained to them. Likewise, they gloried of God, not as the Lord commandeth by the prophet Jeremie, that, being humbled in ourselves, we should seek our glory in him only; but without any knowledge of his goodness, for vain ostentation sake they made him peculiarly theirs before men, and boasted themselves for his people, of whom inwardly they were altogether void.[4] This is not the glorying of the heart, but the bragging of the tongue.

The Jews gloried, not in the keeping of the law, but in this only, that the law was committed to them.

Jer. ix. 24.

18. *Thou knowest his will, and approvest the things are excellent.* Now he granteth unto them the knowledge of the will of God, and the approbation or allowing of things profitable, which knowledge and allowing of things they had

[1] "Ut hæc mihi non concedas," though you should not concede this to me.
[2] "In posterum prospicere," provide for the future. [3] "Se contulisse," had recourse to, adopted.
[4] "Illum, quo intus vacui erant, apud homines vanæ ostentationis causa peculiariter suum faciebant, ac se venditabant pro ejus populo," for the sake of vain ostentation before men, they made Him, of whom they were inwardly void, to be peculiarly their own, and gave themselves out for his people.

Digitized by Google

A twofold approbation of things.

obtained by the doctrine of the law. There is a twofold approbation or allowing of things; one of election, when we embrace that we have approved and allowed for good; another of judgment, whereby verily we discern good from evil, but with industry or study we do not follow after it. The Jews, therefore, were so learned in the law, that they could judge of manners and correct them; but they had small care to try or prove their own life according to the same censure.

Moreover, seeing Paul reproveth their hypocrisy, we may gather by the contrary, (if so that our judgment proceed from a sincere affection,) that profitable things are then truly proved when God is hearkened unto; for his will, as it is revealed in the law, is set down here for the guide and mistress of true probation.

Then we judge aright, when we judge according to the word of God.

19. *And persuadest thyself.* He granteth yet more unto them, as though they had not only enough to serve their own turn, but also wherewithal they might enrich others. He granteth, (I say,) that they had such store of knowledge, as might also have overflowed unto others. That which followeth, namely,

20. *Having the form of knowledge,* I understand causatively, that it may be resolved thus, because thou hast the form of knowledge. For hence came it that they professed themselves to be the teachers of others, because they were thought to carry about all the secrets of the law in their breast. The word *form* is not put for an example, because Paul hath set down the word μορφωσιν, and not τυπον; but I think he would note the glorious pomp or show of doctrine, which is commonly called appearance. And it is most certain that they had not that knowledge which they pretended; howbeit, Paul by the way, checking the corrupted abuse of the law, on the other part, showeth that true knowledge is to be sought for out of the law, that truth may be firm and immovable.

True knowledge to be sought for in the law.

21. *Thou, therefore, that teachest another.* Although those

Digitized by Google

praises of the Jews which he hath hitherto reckoned, were such as might worthily have garnished and set them forth, if they had not wanted the truer ornaments; yet because they contained such indifferent gifts, as both might be in the godless, and be corrupted by wicked abuse, they are not sufficient unto true glory. Paul also, not thinking it enough to refute and taunt their arrogancy, that they trusted only in those things, doth also return[1] even those again upon them to their reproach. For he deserveth great reproach and infamy, who maketh the gifts of God, which otherwise are noble and excellent, not only unprofitable, but also by his pravity doth contaminate and defile them. And he is a perverse counsellor, who, not providing for himself, is wise only to the profit of others; he showeth, therefore, how that was their dishonour, which they take to be their praise.

Look, by how much any is more honourably garnished with ornaments from God, by so much he is the more infamous if he be not answerable to them.

Thou that preachest a man should not steal. He seemeth to have respect unto the place in the psalm, "God said unto the wicked, Wherefore dost thou preach my statutes, and takest my testament into thy mouth? seeing thou hatest discipline, and hast cast my words behind thee: if thou dost see a thief, thou consentest with him, and takest part with the adulterers." Which objurgation or chiding, as it agreed unto the Jews in old time, who, trusting to the bare knowledge of the law, lived never a whit the better than if they had no law at all; so we must beware lest, at this day, it be turned against us. And surely it is too true in a great many, who, while they boast themselves to have a certain singular knowledge, as though the gospel were not a rule of life, they are given over unto all kind of uncleanness. Let us not, therefore, dally so securely with the Lord; let us remember what judgment hangeth over such prattlers,[2] who show forth the Word of God only in jangling.

Psalm l. 16.

22. *Thou which abhorrest idols.* Very aptly he opposeth sacrilege to idolatry, as a thing of the same kind; for sacrilege simply is a profanation of the Divine majesty; which sin was not unknown unto the heathen poets. For this

Sacrilege, what it is.

[1] "Retorquet," retorts.

[2] "Logo-Dædalis," Logo-Dædalists.

Digitized by Google

Metamorph. iii.

cause Ovid chargeth Lycurgus with sacrilege, for contemning the solemn feasts of Bacchus; and in Fastis, he calleth those *sacrilegas manus, id est*, wicked hands, which violated the majesty of Venus. But seeing the Gentiles gave the majesty of their gods unto idols, they counted that only for sacrilege, if any did steal what was dedicated to their temples, wherein they thought all religion consisted. So at this day, where superstition reigneth instead of the Word of God, they acknowledge no other sacrilege than the stealing of the riches of temples; because with them there is no God but in idols, no religion but in riot and pomp. And here we are admonished, first, That we flatter not ourselves, when we have observed some part of the law, and contemn the residue.

Two things to be noted.

Secondly, That we glory not so for external idolatry removed, that in the meanwhile we have no care to banish and expel from us that impiety lieth hid in our minds.

23. *Thou which gloriest in the law, &c.* Although every transgressor putteth God to reproach, (seeing all men are born to this end, that they should worship him in righteousness and holiness,) yet he doth justly charge the Jews herein with a special fault; for, while they preached God to be their lawgiver, and had no care to order their lives according to his rule, they declared that the majesty of their God (which they so easily contemned) was of no great count with them. After which sort, at this day, those defame Christ by the transgression of the gospel, who vainly talk of his doctrine, which, in the meanwhile, by their licentious and lustful life, they tread under foot.

They, in a special sort, dishonour God, who pretend his name, and keep not his law.

24. *For the name of God.* I think this testimony rather to be taken out of Ezechiel than out of Esay, seeing with Esay there are no upbraidings against the people, whereof all that chapter of Ezechiel is full. Some think it is an argument taken from the less to the greater, to this sense, if the prophet, not without cause, reproved the Jews of his time, that, for their captivity, the glory and power of God was despised amongst the Gentiles, as though God had not been able to conserve the people which he had taken into his pro-

Ezek. xxxvi. 23. Isaiah lii. 5.

Digitized by Google

tection; much more are you a reproach and dishonour unto God, by whose manners his religion being estimated, it is evil spoken of. Which sentence, as I do not disprove, so I wish rather to have one more sincere, [clear;] as though it were said, we see that all the reproaches of the people of Israel do fall upon the name of God; because, seeing they are counted and called the people of God, they bear the name of God graven as it were in their forehead; whereby it must needs come to pass amongst men, that that God, in whose name they boast themselves, should be after a sort defamed by their filthiness.

The reproaches of men fall upon the name of God, whom they profess.

And this is a marvellous unworthy thing, that they which have their glory from God should be a reproach unto his sacred name; for, at the least, they ought to requite him otherwise.

25. *Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou dost keep the law; but if thou shalt be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is turned into uncircumcision.*

26. *If, therefore, uncircumcision shall keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?*

27. *And the uncircumcision which is by nature (if it keep the law) shall judge thee, which by the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law;*

28. *For he is not a Jew that is one openly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh.*

29. *But he is a Jew which is one within, and the circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

25. *Circumcision verily profiteth.* By a *preoccupation*[1] he removeth those things which the Jews, on the contrary, might take again[2] for the defence of their cause; for, if circumcision were a seal of the covenant of the Lord, whereby the Lord chose Abraham and his seed for a peculiar people unto himself, they were thought to glory therein not in vain; but because the truth of the sign being omitted, they abode in the external form. He answereth, that there is no cause

[1] "Per anticipationem," by anticipation. [2] "Excipere," except.

Digitized by Google

why they should arrogate anything unto themselves of the bare sign.

Wherein the verity of circumcision consisted.

The verity of circumcision did consist in the spiritual promise, which required faith. The Jews neglected both, as well the promise as faith. Foolish, therefore, was their confidence. Whereby it cometh to pass, that he omitteth here the principal use of circumcision, namely, while he applieth his talk unto their gross error, as he doth with the Galathians. And that is diligently to be noted. For if he should intreat of the whole nature and property of circumcision, it were absurd that there should be no mention of grace and free promise. But in both places he speaketh according to the circumstance of the cause he handleth; therefore he toucheth only that part which was in controversy.

Paul speaketh here of circumcision according to their opinion.

They thought that circumcision of itself was a work sufficient unto the obtaining of righteousness. Therefore, that he might speak according to their opinion, he answereth, that if the work be respected in circumcision, this is the condition of it, that he who is circumcised give himself to worship God wholly and perfectly: the work, therefore, of circumcision is perfection. And thus we may speak of our baptism. If any trusting in the only confidence of the water of baptism, doth think himself to be justified, as though he had now got holiness by that work, the end of baptism is to be objected, namely, that by that the Lord doth call us unto holiness of life. Here should [might] the promise and grace, which baptism doth testify and seal unto us, be passed over in silence, because we are to deal with those who, being content with the vain shadow of baptism, they care not, nor consider not, that which is the principal in it. And this verily you are to note in Paul, when he speaketh of signs or sacraments to the faithful, and not by contention or controversy, that his manner is to conjoin them with the efficacy and accomplishment of their promises; when he hath to deal with overthwart and foolish interpreters of the signs or sacraments, then omitting to mention the proper and true nature of the signs or sacraments, he directeth his whole style against their corrupt interpretation. And many, because they see Paul bringeth circumcision rather than any other work of the law, do think that he

Digitized by Google

taketh away righteousness from the ceremonies only;[1] but it is far otherwise; for this thing is wont always to follow, that they which dare set their merits against the righteousness of God, glory more in external observations than in sound virtues; for whoso is truly touched and moved with the fear of God, dare never lift up his eyes to heaven, for the more he shall strive unto true righteousness, the better he shall see how far he is from it. As for the Pharisees, who think it enough to shadow their holiness with external hypocrisy, it is no marvel though they so easily flatter themselves; therefore Paul, when he had left the Jews nothing but this poor shift, that they should boast themselves to be justified by circumcision, he now also taketh from them this vain visour.

26. *If, therefore, uncircumcision, &c.* This is a most strong argument. Everything is inferior to his end,[2] and is set under it. *Circumcision* hath respect unto the law; therefore, it ought to be inferior to it. It is more, therefore, to keep the law than circumcision, which for the cause thereof was ordained. Whereupon it followeth, that the uncircumcised, if he keep the law, doth far excel the Jew, being a transgressor of the law, with his barren and unprofitable circumcision. And so albeit by nature he is polluted, yet by the observation or keeping of the law he shall be sanctified, that his uncircumcision may be imputed unto him instead of circumcision. This word *uncircumcision* in the second place, [clause,] is to be understood properly in its proper signification: in the first place, [clause,] improperly for the Gentiles, the thing for the person. Furthermore, here no man ought curiously to trouble himself with searching of what keepers of the law this may be construed which Paul saith, seeing none such can be found. For simply he had this in his mind by the way of supposition; or supposing, if there were found any Gentile which did observe the law, that his righteousness in uncircumcision is of more value than the circumcision of the Jew

Paul speaketh here by supposition.

[1] "Eum adimere solis ceremoniis justitiam," that he denies justification to ceremonies merely. [2] "Unum quodque suo fine inferius," the means are always inferior to the end.

Digitized by Google

without righteousness. Therefore, I refer that which followeth, "he which by nature is uncircumcised shall judge the circumcised," not unto the persons, but unto the example; as that, "The queen of the south shall come," &c. Item, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment," &c. For even the words of Paul lead us unto this sense. The Gentile (quoth he) being a keeper of the law shall judge thee, being a transgressor, although he is uncircumcised, and thou hast the literal circumcision.

Matt. xii. 41, 42.
Luke xi. 31.

Hypallage is, when words are understood contrariwise.

27. *The letter and circumcision.* By the figure *hypallage*, for *circumcision* literal. Neither meaneth he that they therefore violate the law because they have the letter of circumcision, but because, together with that their external ceremony, they cease not to pollute the spiritual worship of God, namely, piety, righteousness, judgment, and verity, which things, notwithstanding, are the principal things of the law.

28. *For he is not a Jew, &c.* The meaning is, that a true Jew is not to be judged either by the progeny of the flesh, or title of profession, or by the external sacrament or sign. Neither doth that circumcision, which maketh a Jew consist only in outward figure or show, but both of them are internal or inward. That which he addeth of true circumcision is taken from divers places of Scripture, yea, from their common doctrine; because the people are everywhere commanded to circumcise their heart, and the Lord promiseth that he will do it. For the foreskin was cut off, not as a little corruption of one part, but as the corruption of the whole nature; therefore, circumcision is the mortification of the whole flesh. Whereas he addeth, *that it is in the spirit, and not in the letter*, understand it thus; he calleth the external observation without piety the letter; by the spirit he meaneth the end of the ceremony, which is spiritual. For, seeing the whole weight or substance of signs and rites depend upon their end, the end being taken away, the letter only remaineth, which by itself is unprofitable. And this is the reason of the speech; because, where the Word of God is preached, whatsoever it commandeth, except it be received

A true Jew, and true circumcision, is internal.

Letter signifieth the external observation, spirit the end of the ceremony.

Digitized by Google

of men with a sincere affection of the heart, it abideth in the letter, that is, in the cold or faint letter; but if it pierce into the mind, it is in a manner transformed into the spirit. He alludeth unto the difference of the Old and New Testament, which Jeremiah noteth, where the Lord pronounceth that his covenant shall be firm and stable, after that it is graven in their inward parts. Paul also, in another place, had respect hereunto, where he, comparing the law with the gospel, calleth the law "the letter," which is not only dead, but also killeth, but the gospel he adorneth with the title "spirit." Furthermore, too gross hath the foolishness of those been which have made of the letter a twofold sense, and of the spirit allegories.[1]

Jer. xxxi. 33.

2 Cor. iii. 6.

29. *Whose praise is not of men.* Because the eyes of men only behold the things are apparent, he denieth it to be sufficient to be commendable in man's opinion, which often is deceived by the external show; but the eyes of God must be satisfied, which behold the very deepest secrets of the heart. So he draweth hypocrites again (which smooth themselves with false persuasions) unto the tribunal seat of God.

TAYLOR INST. OXFORD.

CHAPTER III.

1. *What is, therefore, the prerogative of the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision?*
2. *Much every way; and first of all, because the oracles of God were committed unto them.*

ALTHOUGH Paul hath notably proved, that bare *circumcision* doth profit the Jews nothing, yet inasmuch as he could not deny but there was some difference between the Gentiles

[1] "Qui ex litera fecerunt genuinum sensum, ex spiritu allegorias," who have made "the letter" to be the genuine meaning, and "the spirit" to be the allegorical meaning. The Translator appears to have read "*geminum*."

Digitized by Google

and the Jews, which was pointed out or sealed of the Lord by that sacrament; and it was an absurd thing to make that difference, or diversity, void and of none effect, whereof the Lord was the author; it remained, therefore, he should unfold this objection also. Truly it was apparent, that that was a foolish glory which the Jews had therein. Notwithstanding this doubt yet remained, to what end circumcision was instituted of the Lord, except it were notably profitable for some thing. Therefore, by the way of exception or subjection, he demandeth wherein the Jew excelleth the Gentile. And by another interrogation he addeth the reason of the question, when he saith,

What profit is there of circumcision? For that did distinguish the Jews from the vulgar sort of men; as Paul calleth the ceremonies the partition wall, which separated the one from the other.

Eph. ii. 14.

2. *Much every way.* That is, much altogether, much thoroughly, or utterly. Here he beginneth to give unto the sacrament his praise; yet he will not grant unto the Jews that they should be proud therefore. For, when he saith, *they were marked with the seal of circumcision*, that they might be reckoned the sons of God, he doth not acknowledge them to have excelled others by any merit of theirs, or dignity of their own, but by the benefits of God. If the men, therefore, be considered, he showeth they are like unto others; but if the benefits of God be considered, he declareth, that therein they have whereby they excel other people.

In what respect the Jews excelled others.

First, because the oracles of God were committed unto them. Many think it to be the figure *anapodotum*, because he propoundeth more than he expoundeth afterward. Yet this word *first* seemeth unto me not to be a note of order, but simply to signify specially, or chiefly, in this sense, "If there had been no more but this, that they had the oracles of God committed unto them, it ought to be sufficient unto their dignity." And it is worthy the noting, that the profit of circumcision is not placed in the bare sign, but is to be esteemed by the Word. Here verily Paul demandeth what

Anapodotum is a fault in speaking or writing, when that followeth not which might answer that which went before, as, here is first, and there followeth not second.

Digitized by Google

the sacrament did profit the Jews. He answereth, because God committed unto them the treasure of his celestial wisdom: whereupon it followeth, that the word being taken away, there remaineth no more prerogative. By *oracles*, he meaneth the covenant which first was revealed to Abraham and his posterity, afterward was confirmed and interpreted by the law and the prophets. And the oracles of God were committed unto them, that they might conserve them with them, so long as it pleased the Lord to continue his glory amongst them; afterward, in the time of dispensation, they should publish them throughout the whole world: first, they were keepers of the oracles of God; secondly, they were stewards or disposers. And if this benefit be so greatly to be esteemed, whilst the Lord doth vouchsafe to make any people partaker of his Word, we can never sufficiently detest our ingratitude, which receive the same so negligently, carelessly, that I say not contumeliously.

To what end the oracles of God were committed to the Jews.

3. *What if some were incredulous? shall their incredulity make the faith of God void?*
4. *Let it not be so; but let God be true, and every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mayest be justified in thy sayings, and overcome when thou art judged.*

3. *For what if some, &c.* As before, whilst he respected the Jews glorying in the bare sign, yet he did not grant unto them so much as a spark of glory; so now, whilst he considereth the nature of the sign, he testifieth that the virtue thereof is not abolished, no, not through their vanity. Because, therefore, he seemed above to import, that if there were any grace in the sign of circumcision, it were all perished through the unthankfulness of the Jews. Now, again, by the way of exception or subjection, he demandeth what is to be thought thereof. And here is a kind of silence or concealing; because he expresseth less than he would have to be understood; for he might truly have said, that a great part of the people had cast from them the covenant of the Lord; but because that had been marvellously bitter in the

Digitized by Google

ears of the Jews, that he might mitigate the roughness thereof he only nameth some.

Shall their incredulity, &c. Καταργειν, properly, is to make void and of none effect; which signification is most apt for this present sentence. For Paul entreateth not only whether the incredulity of men can let the verity of God, that it should not remain firm and stable in itself, but whether it can hinder the effect and accomplishment thereof amongst men. The meaning therefore is, seeing the most of the Jews were covenant-breakers, whether through their unfaithfulness the covenant of God be so abrogated that it should show forth no fruit amongst them? he answereth, that it cannot come to pass through the pravity of men, that the verity of the truth of God should not have his constancy. Therefore, howsoever the greatest part hath broken the covenant, and trodden it under foot, yet, notwithstanding, it retaineth his efficacy, and exerciseth his force, though not in every one, yet at the least in the same nation. And the efficacy or force is this, that the grace and blessing of the Lord might be of strength amongst them unto eternal salvation. And that cannot be but where the promise is received by faith, for so the mutual covenant is confirmed on both sides. Therefore, he signifieth, that there were always some in that nation who, abiding in the faith of the promise, did not fall from that prerogative.

There were always some among the people of the Jews in whom the covenant of God was effectual.

4. *But let God be true.* Howsoever others think, I take it to be an argument from the necessary sequel of the contrary, whereby Paul dissolveth the former objection. For if these two stand together, (yea, do necessarily agree,) that God is true and man a liar, it followeth that the truth of God is not letted through the lie of man. For, except he did now oppose one of these principles against the other, in vain and to no purpose is he straightway so serious in refuting this inconvenience, namely, how God may be righteous if he set forth his righteousness by our unrighteousness. Wherefore the meaning is plain, that the faith of God is so far from being destroyed or overthrown by the un-

Digitized by Google

faithfulness and default of men, that it appeareth more clear or excellent.

He calleth God *true*, not only because he is ready to stand faithfully unto his promises, but also because whatsoever he saith in word he fulfilleth the same in deed; for he so speaketh that his commandment is straight brought into act. On the contrary, man is called a liar, not only because he oftentimes breaketh his promise, but because by nature he coveteth leasing, and fleeth the truth. The former member is a special maxim of Christian philosophy.[1] The latter is taken out of the Psalms, where David confesseth there neither cometh any certainty from man, neither is there any in him. This place is notable, and containeth very necessary consolation; for such is the perversity of men, in refusing or contemning the Word of God, that the certainty thereof should often come into question, except it came to our remembrance that the truth of God dependeth not upon man's verity. But how agreeth this with that which was said immediately before, namely, that the faith of men which may receive the promise is required that the promise of God might be effectual; for faith is contrary unto lying? It seemeth to be a hard question, yet it is easily resolved; to wit, that the Lord, by the lies of men, (which otherwise are hindrances unto his truth,) will yet find unto himself a way where there is no way, that he may overcome, by correcting in his elect that incredulity is ingrafted in our nature, and by subjecting into his obedience such as do seem to be unruly. Finally, now the disputation is of the corruption of nature, and not the grace of God, which is the remedy of the said corruption.

How God is true.

How man is a liar.

Ps. cxvi. 11.

Objection.

Answer.

That thou mightest be justified. The meaning is, It is so far off that the truth of God should be destroyed by our lie and unfaithfulness, that thereby it is made more apparent and manifest. As David testifieth, saying, that, therefore, because he was a sinner, God was always a just and righteous judge, whatsoever he decreed against him; and that

Ps. li. 4.

1 "Primarium axioma totius Christianæ philosophiæ," a primary axiom of all Christian philosophy.

Digitized by Google

he should overcome all the reproaches of the wicked, which would murmur against his righteousness. By the *sayings* of God, David understandeth judgments, which he bringeth forth against us; for whereas they commonly expound it of the promises, that is too much wrested; therefore, this particle, *that*, is not only final, neither noteth a consequence farfetched, but is of as much value as an illation (inferring or bringing in) to this sense, I have sinned against thee, therefore, thou mayest by right punish me; and that Paul hath alleged the place of David in his proper and natural sense, the objection added a little after doth prove, how shall the righteousness of God abide perfect, if our iniquity set it forth? For, in vain, (as I have partly showed a little before,) and out of season, should Paul stay the readers upon this doubt, except David did understand that God, by his wonderful Providence, doth get praise unto his righteousness, even out of the iniquities of men. The second member after the Hebrew is thus, and thou *in judging pure*, which speech importeth nothing else than that God is worthy of praise in all his judgments, howsoever the wicked exclaim, and odiously go about, by their complainings, to overwhelm his glory; but Paul followed the Greek translation, which served better for the present purpose; for we know the apostles, in reciting the words of the Scripture, to be more frank,[1] (free, or bold,) because they counted it sufficient if they applied them unto the matter; wherefore they stood not so much upon the words. Unto the present place, therefore, this shall be the application, If all the sins of mortal men must serve to the setting forth of the glory of the Lord—and he is specially glorified by his truth—it followeth that the vanity of men serveth rather to the establishing than subverting of his truth; and albeit this word, Κρινεσθαι, may be taken as well actively as passively, yet I doubt not but the Grecians have translated it passively, besides the meaning[2] of the prophet.

By sayings, are meant judgments.

Though the iniquities of men, by their own nature, serve to the dishonour of God, and subversion of his truth, yet, by his wonderful Providence, he getteth unto himself glory thence, and thereby establisheth his truth.

5. *Now, if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of*

[1] "Liberiores," use greater freedom. [2] "Præter mentem," contrary to the meaning.

Digitized by Google

God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous, which addeth wrath? (I speak as a man.)

6. *Let it not be so; for how shall God judge the world?*

7. *For if the verity of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why am I yet condemned as a sinner?*

8. *And not rather, (as we are blamed, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.*

5. *Now, if our unrighteousness.* Although this is a digression from the principal cause, yet was it necessary the apostle should add it, lest he should seem to have given unto the wicked that occasion of speaking evil, which he knew to be voluntarily sought for of them. For, seeing they were ready to take every occasion that might make to the defamation of the gospel, they had in the testimony of David what they might catch to the framing of their false detraction. If God seek nothing else at the hands of men than to be glorified of them, wherefore doth he punish them when they offend, seeing by their offence they glorify him? Undoubtedly he is angry without cause, if he take occasion at that to be angry whereby he is glorified. Neither is it to be doubted but this surmised accusation was vulgar, and very common, as shall straightway be said again. Therefore, Paul might not pass it over obscurely; and lest any should think he speaketh here according to the persuasion or censure of his own mind, he first showeth how he taketh on him the person of the wicked;[1] and withal he nippeth or sharply reproveth man's reason, whose property he noteth to be always to chat and prate against the wisdom of God; for he saith not, I speak as the wicked, but I speak as a man. And it is certainly so, seeing all the mysteries of God are strange or absurd unto the flesh. It is so bold, that it doubteth not to rise up against them; and which of them it cannot conceive those it wantonly pursueth.[2] Whereby we are admonished, if we will become capable of the mysteries of God, first of all we must labour that our own sense (or sensual

This objection is answered in the latter end of the 6th verse.

Paul speaketh not here his own persuasion, but taketh on him the person of the wicked.

[1] "Præfatur se suscipere impiorum personam," he premises that he is speaking in the person of the wicked. [2] "Insectari," assaileth.

Digitized by Google

judgment) being laid apart, we may yield and give ourselves into the obedience of the Word. This word, *wrath*, which is used for judgment here, hath respect unto the punishment; as if he had said, is God unrighteous in punishing iniquities, which set forth his righteousness?

6. *Let it not be so.* In staunching this blasphemy, he answereth not directly unto the objection; but first beginneth at the abhorring thereof, lest Christian religion should seem to bring so great absurdities with it. And that is somewhat more than if he had simply refuted it; for he giveth to understand thereby that this wicked saying is worthy to be abhorred, and not to be heard. Straightway he addeth, but (as they call it) an indirect refutation; for he doth not absolutely take away the obloquy,[1] but only answereth that that is absurd which is objected.

Furthermore, he taketh an argument from the office of God, whereby he proveth that to be impossible.

God shall judge this world; therefore, he cannot be unjust: which argument is not taken (as a man would say) from the bare power of God, but from his actual power, which shineth in the whole course and order of his works; as if it were said thus, the office of God is to judge the world; that is, by his righteousness to compose and bring into good order whatsoever is disordered in the same; therefore, he can do nothing unjustly. And he seemeth to allude unto the
Gen. xviii. 25. place of Moses, where, while Abraham prayeth God that he would not utterly destroy Sodom, It is not meet (quoth he) that thou, which shalt judge the earth, shouldest destroy the just with the unjust; neither is that thy part, neither can
Job. xxxiv. 17. it be said of thee. In Job there is the like saying, Shall he that hateth judgment govern? For, in that there are often found wicked judges amongst men, that is, either because they use their authority against law and right, or else because they are unadvisedly lifted up thither, or else because they degenerate from themselves, in God there is no such matter. Seeing, therefore, he is a judge by nature, he

[1] "Calumniam," calumny.

Digitized by Google

must needs be just; because he cannot deny himself. Paul, therefore, reasoneth from that [which] is impossible, proving God (to whom it is proper, or rather essential, to govern the world righteously) to be wrongfully charged with unrighteousness. And although this doctrine of Paul be extended unto the general regiment[1] of God, yet I deny not but it hath special respect unto the last judgment, because then at the length shall the sound renewing of the right order appear. If thou dost desire a direct refutation, whereby such blasphemous speeches may be quenched, understand it thus, that this cometh not to pass through the nature of unrighteousness, that the righteousness of God should appear the more thereby; but our wickedness is so overcome of the goodness of God, that it is rather converted into another end than it doth tend unto.

Apply this answer unto the objection in the beginning of the 5th verse.

7. *For if the truth of God by my lie, &c.* I doubt not but this objection, also, is pronounced in the person of the wicked; for it is an exposition of that [which] went before; and should have been joined, but that the apostle being moved with the heinousness, or uncomeliness of the thing, did break off his speech in the midst. The meaning is, if by our lie the truth of God be made more clear, and after a sort established, whence also more glory redoundeth unto him, it is not meet that he should be punished for a sinner, who is the minister of the glory of God.

8. *And not rather as, &c.* This is a defective[2] speech, wherein there must somewhat be understood; it shall be perfect if thou dost resolve it thus, *And why is it not rather said*, (as we are blamed,) &c.

That evil must be done, that good may come. The apostle verily vouchsafeth not to answer this ungodly cavillation, which, nevertheless, it shall be lawful by good reason to repress; for thus much only it pretendeth, if God be glorified by our iniquity, and nothing better beseemeth a man to do in his life than to procure the glory of God, then to his

Objection.

[1] "Regimen," government. [2] "Ecleptica," elliptic.

Digitized by Google

Answer. glory we must sin; but this may easily be answered, that evil by itself can bring forth nothing but evil.

Whereas, therefore, the glory of God is made clear by our sin, that is not the work of man, but of God, who, as a wonderful workman, knoweth to subdue our wickedness, and to convey it to another end; that besides that end it is appointed unto of us, he converteth it to increase his glory. God hath prescribed unto us a manner how he will be glorified of us; namely, piety, which consisteth in the obedience of his Word. He that passeth these bounds doth not go about to honour God, but rather to dishonour him. In that it falleth out otherwise, that is to be ascribed unto the Providence of God, and not unto the wickedness of man, which letteth nothing but the majesty of God may be utterly overthrown,[1] much less letteth it that the same should not be violated.

As we are blamed. Seeing Paul intreated[2] so reverently of the secret judgments of God, it is marvellous that the enemies fell to such waywardness to calumniate him; but there was never yet so great religion and sobriety in the servants of God, which could bridle impure and poisonable tongues. It is not, therefore, a new example, that the adversaries at this day do charge us with false accusations, and make our doctrine odious, (which both we ourselves know, and all, both angels and faithful men, witness with us, that it is the pure gospel of Christ.) Nothing can be imagined more monstrous than that we read here to have been laid to the charge of Paul; and all to the end his preaching might be made odious or contemptible to the ignorant. Let us, therefore, bear it, that the wicked, by malicious detractions, do deprave the truth which we preach; and let us not, therefore, cease to defend the simple confession thereof, seeing it hath in itself sufficient virtue to overcome and vanquish their lies. Nevertheless, by the example of the apostle, let us, as much as in us lieth, resist their malicious subtleties, lest ungracious and naughty wretches should freely[3] blaspheme the Creator.

Let the servants of God deal as circumspectly as may be in the mysteries of God, yet will the wicked speak evil.

[1] "Per quam non stat quominus Dei majestas evertatur," to which it is not owing that the majesty of God is not overthrown. [2] "Dissereret," discoursed. [3] "Impune," with impunity, without check.

Digitized by Google

Whose judgment is just. Some take this actively, only that Paul should agree unto [with] them, that that was absurd which they objected, lest the doctrine of the gospel should be thought to be joined with such strange and absurd things; but I like better of the passive signification: for it were not meet simply to agree unto so great lewdness, which meriteth rather to be sharply reproved, which thing Paul seemeth unto me to do. Their perversity, therefore, is two ways damnable. First, In that this impiety could come into their mind even unto the consenting thereto. Secondly, That in slandering the gospel, they durst take their malicious detraction hence.

9. *What then? are we more excellent? No, in no wise; for we have already alleged, (or promised to prove,) that all, both Jews and Gentiles, are under sin.*

9. *What then?* From his digression he returneth unto his purpose. For, lest the Jews, perhaps, should take it that they were spoiled of their right, when he reckoned these titles of dignity whereby they advanced themselves above the Gentiles, now, at the length, he unfoldeth the question, whether they excel the Gentiles or no in any thing? And albeit this answer in show may seem to be much[1] contrary to the former, (because he now taketh from them all pre-eminence to whom he gave much before,) yet there is no variance; for those privileges whereby he confesseth them to excel consisteth, out of themselves, in the goodness of God, and not in their own merit. And [But] here he demandeth, after their dignity, whether they could glory of anything in themselves? Therefore, these two answers agree so, that this proceedeth out of the other;[2] for, when he extolled their prerogatives, including them in the only benefits of God, he declared them to have nothing of their own. Whereupon that which he now answereth might forthwith be inferred; for, if their principal pre-eminence be, that the oracles of God were committed to them, and they have it not by their merit, there is nothing, therefore, left unto them, whereby they

Whatsoever pre-eminence was in the Jews, it was of the goodness of God towards them, and not of their own dignity.

[1] "Nonnihil," somewhat.

[2] "Ut hæc ex altera consequatur," that the one follows from the other.

Digitized by Google

might be proud in the sight of God. And note the sacred workmanship or cunning,[1] that when he gave unto them excellency or pre-eminence, he spake in the third person. Now, when he will take all from them, he putteth himself in the number that he might avoid offence.

For we have already alleged, or promised to prove. The Greek verb αἰτιᾶσθαι, which Paul useth here, is a word appertaining to judgment;[2] therefore it hath pleased us to translate it, *we have alleged, (determined, or purposed,) to prove.* For the accuser, in his action, is said to allege the crime, which he is ready to prove by other testimonies and proofs. And the apostle had cited all mankind generally before the tribunal-seat of God, that he might include all under the same condemnation. And in vain is it for any man to object, that the apostle doth not only accuse here, but rather prove; for no accusation is true but that which is grounded upon firm and sure proofs: as Cicero, in a certain place, distinguisheth between an accusation and a reproach. Moreover, to be *under sin*, is as much as to be condemned for sinners justly before God, or to be holden under the curse which is due unto sin; for, as righteousness bringeth with it absolution, so condemnation followeth sin.

What it is to be under sin.

10. *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
11. *There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh God.*
12. *They have all gone out of the way; they have been made altogether unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*
13. *Their throat is an open sepulchre; they have used their tongues to deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:*
14. *Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.*
15. *Their feet are swift to shed blood.*
16. *Contrition and calamity* are *in their ways:*
17. *And the way of peace have they not known.*
18. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.*

10. *As it is written.* Hitherto he hath used reasons to

[1] "Sanctum artificium."

[2] "Proprie est judiciale," is properly a judicial or forensic term.

Digitized by Google

convince men of their iniquity. Now he beginneth to argue from authority, which is the surest kind of proof with Christians, so that the authority be given unto the only God. And here let ecclesiastical persons[1] learn what is their office; for, if Paul here affirm no doctrine which he also confirmeth not by certain testimony of Scripture, much less is this thing to be attempted of them whose whole charge is this, to preach that gospel which they have received by the hands of Paul and others.

The duty of ecclesiastical persons.

There is none righteous. Seeing the apostle allegeth rather the sense than the words absolutely, before he would descend unto the particulars, he seemeth first to have put down in general what is the sum of those things which are noted by the prophet to be in man, namely, that *none is just;* and afterward, to reckon up particularly the fruits of this unrighteousness: and the first is, that *there is none that understandeth.* And this foolishness is straightway reproved, because *they seek not God;* for vain is that man in whom the knowledge of God is not, what knowledge soever he have besides. Yea, the sciences and faculties themselves, which in themselves are good, yet are made but vain in us, if they want this foundation.

Psalm xiv. 1.

Psalm liii. 3.

All knowledge without the knowledge of God is vain.

It followeth, *There is none that doeth good;* whereby is meant, that they have put off all sense of humanity. For, as the best bond of mutual conjunction amongst us consisteth in the knowledge of God, (because, as He is Father unto all, He doth notably reconcile us; and out of Him there is nothing but mere dissipation,) so, for the most part, inhumanity followeth the ignorance of Him, while every man, other men being contemned, loveth and seeketh himself. Contrariwise it is added, *Their throat is an open sepulchre;* that is to say, a gulf to destroy men. And it is more than if he had said, devourers, (or eaters of men;[2]) because it is a note of outrageous cruelty, that the throat of man should be such a gulf, that it should serve to the swallowing and supping up of whole men. Hereunto appertaineth what also is said, *their tongues are deceitful, and lips smeared with poison.*

Psalm v. 9.

Outrageous cruelty described.

Psalm cxl. 3.

[1] "Doctores," teachers. [2] "Ανθρωποφαγους," anthropophagi.

Digitized by Google

Psalm x. 7. It followeth, *Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.* Which vice is contrary to the former; but the meaning is, they are every way full of mischief; for, if they speak fair, they deceive, and under fair speeches they proffer poison; but if they broach that they have in their mind, thence cometh bitterness and cursing. It is a notable kind of speech,[1] which is added out of Esay, *Contrition and calamity are* Isaiah lix. 7. *in their ways.* For it is a singular demonstration, or description of barbarous cruelty,[2] which, wheresoever it go or come, by destroying all things, it causeth solitariness and desolation; after which sort Pliny describeth Domitian.

It followeth, *And the way of peace they have not known,* because they are so accustomed with robberies, violences, injuries, severity, and cruelty, that they know not to do any thing loving and courteously. Lastly, in the conclusion that is repeated again under another word, which we spake of at the first, namely, that out of the contempt of God cometh all wickedness; for, seeing the fear of God is the fountain of wisdom, when we are once departed from that, there abideth nothing right or sincere. Finally, as it is a bridle to restrain our naughtiness, so, if it be wanting, we are loosed unto all kind of licentious wickedness.

Where the fear of God is wanting, no good can be present.

And lest any should think these testimonies were unfitly wrested, let us consider every one of them according to the circumstances of the places whence they are taken. David saith, there was so great perversity or naughtiness of nature in men, that God having beholden them all in order, he could not find one just. It followeth, therefore, that this mischief went over all mankind, seeing nothing is hid from the sight of God. He speaketh, verily, in the end of the Psalm of the redemption of Israel; but straightway we shall show in what manner holy men, and how far forth they are exempted from this condition. In the other Psalms he complaineth of the wickedness of his enemies, where, under himself and his, he pourtrayeth a certain type of the kingdom of Christ; wherefore, under his adversaries all those are re-

The alleged places particularly examined.

Psalm xiv. 1.

[1] "Pulcherrima.....loquutio," a very beautiful expression.

[2] "Hypotyposis supra modum barbaræ feritatis," an example of singularly barbarous cruelty.

Digitized by Google

presented unto us which, being estranged from Christ, are not led by his Spirit. Esay doth expressly note Israel; wherefore his accusation doth the more agree[1] unto the Gentiles. What then? There is no question but the nature of men is described under these terms, that thereby we might see what man is, being left unto himself, inasmuch as Scripture testifieth all to be such which are not regenerate by the grace of God. The condition of holy men were nothing better, but that the same depravity or naughtiness is corrected in them. Yet, to the end they might remember how they differ nothing from others by nature, in the reliques of their flesh (wherewith they are still compassed) they feel the seeds of those things, which would continually bring forth fruit in them, except mortification did let them, which they ought to ascribe unto the mercy of the Lord, and not unto their nature. And, finally, whereas all the faults [which] are here reckoned do not appear in every one, this letteth not but they may rightly and truly be contained (or compacted) under the nature of man, as we have already noted.

How the godly are exempted from the common condition of men.

Chap. i. 26.

19. *We know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith it to them which are under the law; that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world be culpable before God.*

20. *Therefore, by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law cometh the knowledge of sin.*

19. *We know.* Having left the Gentiles, he doth precisely apply those speeches unto the Jews, in subduing of whom there was much more ado; because they being no less void of righteousness than the Gentiles, did cover themselves with the cloak of the covenant of God, as though this were sufficient holiness for them, that they were distinguished from the world by the election of God. And truly he bringeth forth these evasions which he knew well the Jews had at hand; for whatsoever was spoken sinistrously in the law against all mankind, they were wont to return it upon the Gentiles, as though they[2] were exempted from the common sort. And surely so they were, but that they fell from their degree.

[1] "Multo magis competit," is much more applicable. [2] "Ipsi," they themselves.

Digitized by Google

Therefore, lest some false imagination of their own private worthiness should hinder them, and lest they should restrain those things unto the Gentiles only, which do no less appertain unto themselves, Paul here preventeth that; and, by an argument taken from the end of the Scripture, he showeth that they are not only in the same condition with the common sort of men, but that that judgment is peculiarly denounced of them. And hereby we see the diligence of the apostle in repelling objections; for to whom is the law given, or to whose instruction ought it to serve, if not to the Jews? In that, therefore, it maketh mention of others, that it doth, (as it were,) Παρεργον, by the way, (or, as they say, lightly;) but to his [its] own scholars it doth principally apply his [its] doctrine.

Paul applieth the former testimonies of Scripture against the Jews.

In the law. He saith, the Jews are those to whom the law was appointed; whereby it followeth that it doth properly appertain unto them; and under the law he understandeth also the prophets, and so comprehendeth the whole Old Testament.

That every mouth might be stopped. That is, that all evasion and power of excusing may be taken away. It is a metaphor taken from judgments, where he that is guilty, if he have any thing that may serve justly to his defence, asketh leave to speak, that he might clear himself of those things laid against him; but if his own conscience condemn him he holdeth his peace, and, saying nothing, expecteth his condemnation, being even now by his silence condemned. The same sense hath that saying of Job, "I will lay my hand upon my mouth." For he saith, although he wanted not some kind of excuse, yet not going about to justify himself, he would yield unto the sentence of God. The next clause containeth an exposition. For his mouth is stopped who is so holden wrapped in judgment that he can no way escape; otherwise, to be silent before the face of God is to be afraid of his majesty, and, as it were, astonished with his brightness, to become even speechless.

How man's mouth is said to be stopped.

Job xl. 37.

20. *Because by the works of the law.* It is a great question, yea, even amongst the learned, what works be called

Digitized by Google

the works of the law; whilst some extend them unto the observation of the whole law, some others restrain them unto the ceremonies only. The annexing of this word, *law*, did move Chrysostom, Origen, and Jerome, to be of the first opinion;[1] for in that addition they thought there was a peculiar advisement that the speech should not be understood of all works generally. But this doubt is easily loosed. For, seeing works are so far forth just in the sight of the Lord, as we do study by them to give unto him worship and obedience, to the end he might more precisely take from all works the force (virtue or strength) of justification, he hath named those works which specially might justify, if there were any that could justify. For it is the law that hath the promises, without the which our works are of no value before God. Thou seest, therefore, the cause why Paul expressed the works of the law: namely, because by the law there is a reward appointed unto works. Neither were the very schoolmen ignorant hereof; amongst whom it is an old and common saying, that works are not meritorious in respect of any internal (or real) worthiness, but for the covenant.[2] And although they are deceived, for that they see not our works always to be defiled with vices, which do take from them merit, yet that principle is true, namely, that the reward of works dependeth upon the voluntary promise of the law.

Works of the law are named by a kind of excellency, as who should say, if they justify not, then no works justify.

Therefore, Paul wisely, and very well, doth not dispute of bare works; but precisely and namely he allegeth the keeping of the law, of the which properly the question was. As for those things which are brought in of [by] other learned men for the defence of that sentence, they are weaker than meet. By the naming of *circumcision*, they think an example to be propounded which proveth that it appertaineth unto the ceremonies only. But we have already declared why Paul hath named circumcision. For neither do any other swell with the confidence of works than hy-

[1] "Ut in priorem opinionem concederent," to *concede against*, to unite in opposing the former opinion. The context shows that this must be the meaning, though the phraseology of the original is certainly peculiar.

[2] "Non intrinseca dignitate, sed ex pacto," not of intrinsic worth, but by covenant.

Digitized by Google

pocrites; and we know how they glory only in external shows. Secondly, Circumcision, in their judgment, was a certain entrance unto the righteousness of the law; therefore, it seemed also to be a work of great dignity. And whereas they fight out of the Epistle to the Galatians, where, when Paul handleth the same cause, yet he directeth his style unto ceremonies only; that also is not firm enough to obtain that which they would. Sure it is, Paul had to do with such as did incense the people with a false belief or confidence of ceremonies. That he might remove or take this away, he doth not contain himself within the compass of ceremonies, neither disputeth he specially of what value they are; but he comprehendeth the whole law, as may appear by the places, which are all of them derived from that fountain. Such also was the state of that disputation which was holden at Jerusalem amongst the disciples. And it is not without cause we labour to prove Paul, in this place, without exception, to speak of the whole law. For the very style and manner of disputation which he hath hitherto followed, and doth still prosecute, doth sufficiently favour us; and many places do not suffer us to think otherwise. It is, therefore, a sentence notable amongst the chiefest, that no man shall be justified by the keeping of the law. He hath showed the reason before, and repeated it again straightway; because all men together being convicted of transgression, are reproved of unrighteousness by the law. These two are contrary one to the other, (as we shall see more at large in the process,) to be thought righteous by works, and to be guilty of transgression. This word, *flesh*, without any special consideration, betokeneth men; but that it seemeth after a sort to pretend[1] a more general signification. After which manner, more is expressed when one saith, all mortal men, or all mortal creatures, than if he should name all men, as you may see with (or at) [in] Gellius.

Paul speaketh here of works, without exception.

Flesh, without some special restraint, signifieth man.

For by the law. He reasoneth from the contrary, that we have not righteousness by the law, because it convinceth us of sin and damnation; seeing life and death proceed not

[1] "Præ se ferre," to present, to carry with it.

Digitized by Google

forth of the same fountain. And whereas he reasoneth from the contrary effect of the law, that we cannot be justified by it, we must understand his argument proceedeth or holdeth not, except we keep this as an inseparable and perpetual accident,[1] that the law, revealing to man his sin, taketh from him the hope of salvation that way. The law truly by itself, because it instructeth unto righteousness, is the way to salvation; but our pravity and corruption letteth, that this way it profiteth nothing.

Though the law be the rule of righteousness, yet it profiteth nothing, by reason of our corruption.

Now, this must needs be added in the second place, whoever is found to be a sinner, he is spoiled of righteousness. For it is frivolous to feign, with sophisters, a half righteousness, that works should partly justify; but nothing is gotten on this behalf for[2] the corruption of man.

21. *But now is the righteousness of God made manifest without the law, having witness of the law and the prophets;*
22. *To wit, the righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all, that do believe.*

21. *But now is the righteousness, &c.* It is doubted in what sense he calleth that *the righteousness of God* which we obtain by faith; whether, therefore, because it only consisteth or standeth in the sight of God, or, for that the Lord doth give the same unto us of his mercy. Because both interpretations agree well, we will contend on neither part. He saith, therefore, that that righteousness which God both communicateth unto man, and also embraceth only, and acknowledgeth for righteousness, is revealed without the law; that is, without the aid, help, or supportation of the law; so that by the law is meant works. For it may not be referred unto doctrine, which straightway he citeth for the witness of free righteousness by faith. Whereas some restrain it unto ceremonies, shortly after I shall show that to be vain and cold. It remaineth, therefore, that we know the merit of works to be excluded. Where also we see how he mixeth not works with the mercy of God; but all opinion of works being removed and abolished, he establisheth the only mercy of God.

What righteousness is called the righteousness of God, and how the same is revealed without the law, *i. e.* works.

[1] "Accidens," circumstance. [2] "Ob," on account of.

Digitized by Google

Neither am I ignorant that Augustine doth expound it otherwise; for he taketh the righteousness of God for the grace of regeneration: and he confesseth this grace to be free, because the Lord reneweth us, being unworthy, with his Spirit. And from this he excludeth the works of the law, that is, whereby men go about, without renovation of themselves, to deserve God. And I know well enough, that certain new beholders and viewers[1] of matters do arrogantly pronounce[2] this doctrine, as though it were at this day revealed unto them. But it shall appear plainly by the text how the apostle, without exception, comprehendeth all works, yea, those which the Lord worketh in his. For surely Abraham was regenerate, and was led by the Spirit of God, at such time as he denieth him to be justified by works. Therefore, he excludeth from the justification of man, not only those works which are morally good, (as commonly they term them,) and which are done by the instinct of nature, but also what works soever the faithful can have.

All works excluded from justification, yea, even those God worketh in us.

Secondly, If that be the definition of the righteousness of faith, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven. The question is not of this or that kind of works; but the merit of works being done away, only remission of sins is put down for the cause of righteousness. They think these two agree well, man to be justified by faith by the grace of Christ, and yet, notwithstanding, to be justified by works which do proceed from spiritual regeneration; because both God doth freely renew, and by faith we receive his gift. But Paul taketh a far other principle, namely, that the consciences of men are never quiet till they lean (or rest) upon the only mercy of God. Therefore, in another place, after he hath taught God to have been in Christ, that he might justify men, he doth also show the manner, saying, In not imputing to them their sins. Likewise to the Galatians, he therefore maketh the law contrary to faith, in respect of the effect of justifying, because the law promiseth life to those do that [who do what] it commandeth. But the law commandeth not an external show of works only, but the sincere love of God.

2 Cor. v. 19.

Gal. iii. 12.

[1] "Speculatores," speculators, speculative persons.

[2] "Proferre," produce, bring forward.

Digitized by Google

Therefore it followeth, no merit of works can be admitted in the righteousness of faith. Whereby appeareth it is but a frivolous cavil that we are justified in Christ, because we are renewed by the Spirit, as we are the members of Christ; that we are justified by faith, because by faith we are grafted into the body of Christ; that we are justified freely, because God doth find nothing in us but sin.

For therefore are we justified in Christ, because out of ourselves; therefore by faith, because we must needs depend upon his mercy and free promises; therefore freely, because God doth reconcile us unto himself by burying our sins. Neither can that be tied unto the beginning of righteousness, as they dream. For that definition, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven," had place in David, when he had long exercised himself in the worship of God; and Abraham, thirty years after he was called, although he were a singular example of holiness, yet had he no works wherein to glory with God; and, therefore, it is imputed unto him for righteousness that he believed the promise. And when Paul saith, God justifieth men by not imputing their sins, he reciteth that sermon which ought daily to be rehearsed in the church.

Righteousness, by the remission of sins, is not to be tied to the beginning of righteousness.

And that part[1] of the conscience which is troubled in respect of works, is not of the continuance of one day, but ought to last the whole life; whereby it followeth, we are not otherwise justified, even until the day of death; but because we have respect unto Christ only, in whom God hath adopted us, and now holdeth us acceptable. Hereby, also, their cavil is refelled who charge us of falsehood, because we affirm it to be had out of the Scripture, that we are justified by faith only, when as the particle exclusive is no where extant in Scripture. But if justification be both without the law and without us,[2] why shall it not be imputed unto mercy only? If it be of mercy only, then of faith only.

No beginning, proceeding, or perfection of righteousness, but in Christ only.

This particle *now* may simply be taken adversatively, that it be not referred unto time; as we often say *now* for *but yet*. If you had rather refer it unto time, (which I do willingly

[1] "Pax," peace. [2] "Extra nos," out of us.

Digitized by Google

admit, lest he should seem to seek any evasion,) yet, notwithstanding, the only abrogation of ceremonies shall not be understood; because the purpose of the apostle is only by comparison to illustrate the grace wherein we excel the fathers. Therefore, the sense shall be, after Christ was exhibited in the flesh, the righteousness of faith was revealed by the preaching of the gospel. Whereby yet it followeth not that it lay hid before the coming of Christ: for a twofold manifestation is here to be considered; the former is of the Old Testament, which consisted in the word and sacraments; the second of the New Testament, which, besides the ceremonies and promises, containeth the fulness or filling up[1] in Christ; whereunto also is added, a more absolute clearness by the gospel.

A twofold manifestation of the grace of God.

Having witness. He addeth this, lest, in the dispensation of free righteousness, the gospel should seem to be contrary to the law. Therefore, as he denied the righteousness of faith to stand in need of the help of the law, so now he affirmeth it to be confirmed by the testimony of the law. And if the law bear witness unto free righteousness, it is apparent the law was not given therefore, that it might teach men to get unto themselves righteousness by works. Then they pervert the law who wrest it unto that end. Moreover, if thou doest desire the proof of this sentence, prosecute in order the sum of Moses' doctrine, and thou shalt find how man at the beginning, being cast from the kingdom of God, had no other restitution than in the evangelical promises touching the blessed seed, wherein the breaking of the serpent's head is forespoken; and wherein a blessing is promised or denounced to all nations. In the commandments thou shalt find the demonstration of thine iniquity; by the sacrifices and oblations thou shalt learn how the satisfaction and purgation thereof is in Christ only. If you come unto the prophets, in them you shall find most plentiful promises of free grace; concerning which matter, see our Institutions.

The law giveth testimony unto the righteousness of faith.

22. *I say, the righteousness of God.* In few words, he de-

[1] "Complementum," its completion.

Digitized by Google

clareth what manner of righteousness this is, namely, that it resteth or abideth in Christ, and is apprehended by faith. Although, while he inferreth[1] again the name of God, he seemeth to make God the author, and not only an approver of that righteousness of the which he intreateth, as though he should say it cometh from him only, or it hath his original from heaven, and is made manifest to us in Christ. Therefore, when we reason of this righteousness, we must proceed this way: First, the cause of our righteousness must not be referred unto the judgment of men, but unto the tribunal of God, where no righteousness is accounted of but the perfect and absolute obedience of the law; which thing may easily appear by the promises and threatenings. And if that no man can be found that hath attained unto such exact holiness, it followeth all are void of righteousness in themselves. Then must Christ needs help; who, as he is only just, so by transferring his righteousness unto us he maketh us righteous. Now, thou seest how the righteousness of faith is the righteousness of Christ. That we may, therefore, be justified,[2] the efficient cause is the mercy of God: Christ is the matter or material cause; the word and faith is the instrument or instrumental cause. Wherefore, faith is said to justify; because it is the instrument to receive Christ, in whom righteousness is communicated unto us. After that we are made partakers of Christ, not only we ourselves are just, but our works are reputed just before God, namely, because, whatsoever imperfection is in them, it is abolished or taken away by the blood of Christ. The promises, which are conditional by the same grace, also are fulfilled unto us, inasmuch as God doth reward our works as perfect, because the defect or imperfection of them is covered through free pardon.

What manner of righteousness the righteousness of faith is.

Righteousness is a real virtue in Christ, and apprehended of us by faith.

God's mercy the efficient cause, Christ the material cause, and faith the instrumental cause, of our righteousness.

To all, and upon all. For amplification sake, he hath repeated the same thing by divers forms of speaking; to the end he might the rather express that we have heard, namely, that both sole faith is required here, and that the faithful are

[1] "Inculcat," inculcates, introduces.

[2] "Ut ergo justificemur," in our justification, therefore.

Digitized by Google

not distinguished by temporal or external notes; so it mattereth not whether they be Gentiles or Jews.

23. *For there is no difference. All have sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God;*
24. *And are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*
25. *Whom God hath set forth* to be *a reconciliation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness by the forgiveness of the sins that are past, through the patience of God.*
26. *To show at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and a justifier of him which is of the faith of Jesus.*

23. *For there is no difference.* He enjoineth unto all, without exception, the necessity of seeking righteousness in Christ; as if he should say, there is no other way to obtain righteousness by, neither are some justified this way, and other some that way; but all together by faith, because all are sinners; and, therefore, they have not whereon to glory with God. And he taketh it for a thing granted, that when men are come unto the tribunal of God, whosoever is guilty of sin, in his own conscience, he lieth confounded, and so overthrown under his own ignominy, that no sinner can abide the face of God, as we see in the example of Adam. Again, he fighteth with an argument taken from the contrary, where we must mark what followeth, because all men are sinners, Paul inferreth, that they want, or are deprived of, the praise of righteousness. Therefore, according to his doctrine, there is no righteousness but that is perfect and absolute; for if there were any half righteousness, then should not he [who] is a sinner be altogether spoiled of all glory. Whereby that fable of righteousness in part[1] (as they call it) is sufficiently refelled; for if it were true, that we are partly justified by works, and partly by the grace of God, this argument of Paul should be of no force; namely, that all are deprived of the glory of God, because they are sinners. It is, therefore, out of all controversy, there is no righteousness there where sin is, till Christ have put away

All glory of righteousness taken from men, because they are sinners.

Where sin is there is no righteousness, until Christ have taken away the curse.

[1] "Partialis (ut vocant) justitiæ," what is called partial righteousness.

Digitized by Google

the curse. And that is what is said to the Galatians, As many as are under the law are subject to the curse; but we are delivered from this by the benefit of Christ. By the glory of God, he understandeth that glory which hath place before God, as it is said with John, they have loved more the glory of men than the glory of God. And so he calleth us from the delight of human judgment[1] unto the celestial judgment-seat. Gal. iii. 10. John xii. 43.

21. *And are justified freely.* The participle, after the manner of the Grecians, is put instead of the verb. The meaning is, because there remaineth nothing else unto men in themselves; but that they, being smitten through by the just judgment of God, should perish; therefore, they are justified freely by his mercy; for Christ helpeth this misery, and doth communicate himself to the faithful, that in him only they may find all things which are wanting unto them. As it falleth out,[2] there is no place in all the Scripture more notable to set forth the power of this righteousness; for it showeth the mercy of God to be the efficient cause; Christ with his blood to be the matter or material cause; faith conceived by the word to be the formal or instrumental cause. *Lastly,* The glory both of the justice and goodness of God to be the final cause. Concerning the efficient cause, he saith, we are justified freely, and that verily by his grace; therefore, by this[3] he showeth how all is of God, and nothing of ourselves. It might have been sufficient to have opposed grace unto merits; but lest we should imagine an half righteousness, having added a repetition, he doth more clearly show forth his mind; and hath ascribed the true effect of righteousness to the only mercy of God, which righteousness the sophisters rend in pieces and maim, lest they should be constrained to confess their own poverty. The efficient, material, formal, and final cause of our justification.

By the redemption. The matter of our righteousness or justification is, that Christ, by his obedience, hath satisfied the judgment of the Father, and by taking our person upon

[1] "Ab humani theatri plausu," from the plaudit of a human theatre.
[2] "Forte," perhaps, omitted. [3] "Bis," twice, omitted.

Digitized by Google

him, hath delivered us from the tyranny of death, wherewith we were holden captive; for, by the satisfaction of that sacrifice which he offered, our guiltiness is taken away; whereby also the imagination of those is notably refelled, which will have righteousness to be a quality in us; for if we be, therefore, reputed righteous before God, because we are bought or redeemed by a price, then surely we borrow that elsewhere, which is not in ourselves. And straightway Paul declareth[1] of what power this redemption is, and whereunto it serveth, namely, that we might be reconciled to God; for he calleth Christ the propitiation, or rather (which liketh us better, that we might allude unto the old figure) the propitiatory. And what else signifieth that, but that we are just, so far forth as Christ reconcileth[2] the Father to us? But now it behoveth to consider the words.

Righteousness is not a quality in us.

25. *Whom God foreappointed, &c.* Because the Greek word Προτιθεναι sometimes signifieth to determine, or appoint afore, sometimes to bring forth into light; if the first signification be taken, Paul referreth it unto the free mercy of God, that Christ was foreordained a Mediator, which should reconcile the Father to us by the sacrifice of his death; and this is an excellent commendation of grace, that God did willingly of himself seek out a mean whereby he might take away our curse; and certainly this place seemeth to agree with that of John: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Howbeit, if we embrace the other sense, the same reason shall stand, that God in his time made him manifest, whom he had decreed with himself to be the Mediator. In the word propitiatory,[3] I think there is an allusion (as I said) unto the old propitiatory; for he teacheth how that is exhibited in Christ indeed which was figured there. Yet because the other opinion cannot be disproved, if any had rather understand it more simply, I will leave it to their election. The meaning of Paul in this place may surely be gathered out of his words, namely, that

John iii. 16.

[1] "Clarius," more clearly, omitted.
[2] "Propitiat," propitiates.
[3] "Ἱλαστηριον."

Digitized by Google

God without Christ is always angry with us; and that we are reconciled by him while by his righteousness we are accepted; for God doth not detest in us his own workmanship,[1] but our uncleanness, which hath extinguished the light of his image; which uncleanness, when the washing or rinsing of Christ hath done away, he loveth and embraceth us as his own pure workmanship.

Without Christ God is always angry with us.

A propitiatory or reconciliation through faith in his blood. So I had rather, word for word, to keep that Paul hath; for verily he seemeth unto me, by a continual style without interruption, to say, God is reconciled unto us, so soon as we have our confidence reposed in the blood of Christ; because through faith we come into the possession of his benefit. While he nameth blood only, he excludeth not the other parts of our redemption; but rather under a part he comprehendeth the whole sum, and named the blood wherein we have our washing. So by the figure synecdoche the whole cleansing[2] is noted; for, whereas he said of late that God was pleased with us in Christ, now he addeth, that the same is brought to pass by faith; and also what our faith ought chiefly [to] respect in Christ.

When the blood of Christ is only named, the other parts of our redemption are not excluded, but understood by the figure synecdoche, which is, when by a part the whole is understood.

For the forgiveness of sins. The preposition casual is as much in value as if he had said, for forgiveness sake, or to this end, that he might do away sins. And this definition or exposition doth confirm again that which I have now already sundry times warned, namely, that men are not justified because they are such indeed, but by imputation. Only he useth divers words, that he might more evidently declare, there is no merit of ours in this righteousness; for if we obtain it by the remission of sins, we gather, it is out of ourselves. Secondly, if the remission of sins be of the mere liberality of God, all merit falleth to the ground. Yet here ariseth a question, why he restraineth pardon or forgiveness to the sins that are past?[3] Although this place be diversly expounded, it seemeth probable to me, that Paul had regard unto the cleansings or washings of the law;[4] which were

[1] "Id est, quod conditi sumus homines," *i. e.* that he has made us men, omitted. [2] "Expiatio," expiation. [3] "Præcedentia delecta," past sins. [4] "Legales expiationes," legal expiations.

Digitized by Google

only testimonies of the satisfaction to come, for they could not please[1] God. There is the like place to the Hebrews, that through Christ came the redemption of sins that were in[2] the former testament. And yet thou mayest not understand it, that no transgressions but those of the former time are done away by the death of Christ; which dotage or folly some certain madmen have drawn from this place, being undecently wrested. For Paul only showeth, that until the death of Christ there was no price to please God, and that the same was not accomplished or fulfilled by the figures of the law; wherefore, the verity, until the fulness of time, was in suspense. Moreover, the same reason is of those sins that do daily make us guilty; for there is one only satisfaction for all. Some, that they might avoid that inconvenience, have said the former sins were forgiven, lest a liberty of sinning afterward should seem to be granted. And true it is, there is no remission given but to sins committed. Not that the fruit of redemption doth fall away or perish, if afterward we sin, as *Novatus* with his sect did dream; but because this is the dispensation of the gospel, to set before him [who] is about to sin the judgment and wrath of God, and before him [who] hath sinned mercy; howbeit, that is the proper sense which I brought. Whereas he addeth, this remission to have been in *patience or long-sufferance*, they simply understand it for meekness, mildness, or gentleness, which stayed the judgment of God; neither suffered it to burst forth to our destruction, until at the length he received us into favour. But rather it seemeth to be a secret preoccupation,[3] or preventing of an objection. Lest any should object, that it was long ere this mercy appeared, Paul showeth it was an argument of patience.

Heb. ix. 9.

There never was, is, nor shall be, any other satisfaction for sin than the blood of Christ.

Christ's death not only available for sins past, but also if hereafter we fall.

26. *To show, &c.* The repetition of this member is not without an emphasis or force, which repetition Paul did purposely seek after, because it was very necessary; seeing man is persuaded unto nothing more hardly than that he, dis-

[1] "Placare," appease. [2] "Sub priori testamento manebant," remained under the former covenant or dispensation. [3] "Tacita anticipatio," a tacit anticipation.

Digitized by Google

abling himself in all things,[1] should acknowledge them to be received of God; although this new demonstration be mentioned of purpose, that the Jews might open their eyes to behold.

At this time. He referreth that unto the day or time when Christ was exhibited, which hath been at all times. And not unworthily, for that which in old time was known obscurely under shadows, God hath manifested openly in his Son. So the coming of Christ was the time of his good pleasure, and the day of salvation. God, verily, in all ages gave some testimony of his righteousness; but when the Sun of righteousness shined, it appeared far more bright. The comparing, therefore, of the Old and New Testament is to be noted; because then at the last was the righteousness of God manifestly revealed, when Christ was exhibited.

How the righteousness of God, which was at all times, and had effect in all ages, is said to be revealed at this time.

That he might be just. It is a definition of that righteousness, which he said was then revealed when Christ was given; as, in the first chapter, he taught to be declared in the gospel. And he affirmeth it to consist of two members. The first is, that God is just, not as one amongst many, but as one who only containeth in himself all the fulness of righteousness. For otherwise perfect and true praise, such as is due unto him, cannot be given unto him, than while he only obtaineth the name and honour of just,[2] all mankind being condemned of unrighteousness. He setteth the second member in the communication of righteousness, namely, whilst God doth not keep his riches hid up in himself, but poureth them out upon men. Therefore, the righteousness of God appeareth in us, so far forth, as he justifieth us by the faith of Christ; for in vain were Christ given unto righteousness, except there followed a fruition of him by faith. Whereby it followeth that all men were unjust, and damned in themselves, till a remedy was offered from heaven.

The righteousness of God, revealed in the Gospel, containeth two branches; one, that he is absolutely righteous in himself, another, that he communicateth the same unto men.

[1] "Quam ut sibi omnia derogans accepta Deo referat," than to detract in all things from himself, and ascribe every thing to God.

[2] "Neque enim integra et solida laus, qualis debetur ei, aliter tribuitur, quam dum solus obtinet justi nomen et honorem," nor is true and perfect praise properly ascribed to him, unless he alone obtains the name and honour of righteous.

Digitized by Google

27. *Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.*
28. *We determine, therefore, that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law.*

27. *Where then is the glorying?* After that the apostle hath sufficiently, by firm reasons, beaten men down from the confidence of works, he now taunteth their vanity. This exclamation or acclamation[1] to the thing already declared and proved was necessary; for, in this cause, it did not suffice to teach except by greater vehemency of the Holy Ghost, he should lighten and thunder against our pride to overthrow it.[2] And undoubtedly he saith, that glorying is excluded, because we can bring nothing of our own which is worthy to be approved or commended of God. If merit be the matter of glorying, whether you term it *de congruo*, which is, apt, fit, or convenient, or whether you call it *de condigno*, that is, *worthy*, whereby man reconcileth God unto himself. Here thou seest they are both overthrown;[3] for here he speaketh of no diminishing or moderating; but Paul verily leaveth no drop of merit. Moreover, if the glorying of works be so taken away by faith, that faith cannot purely be preached, but in giving all unto the mercy of God, man must need be spoiled of all praise: it followeth, then, that we are not helped by any works to the obtaining of righteousness.

That is called merit "de congruo," when a man of his own good motion, proceeding naturally from him, meriteth the first grace, which they call grace preventing; merit "de condigno," when man, being helped by the first grace, doth make himself worthy of eternal life.

Of works? How doth the apostle here deny our merits to be excluded by the law, seeing before he proved our damnation out of the law? For, if the law make us subject to death, what glory shall we get out of it? Or rather, doth it not cover us, being deprived of all glory, with shame or reproach? But then he showed how our sin is laid open by the detection of the law, because we are all fallen from the observation of it. And here he meaneth, if righteousness were

[1] "Επιφωνημα."
[2] "Nisi majore vehementia Spiritus Sanctus ad prosternendam nostram altitudinem fulminaret," did not the Holy Spirit, in order to humble our pride, thunder with greater vehemence.
[3] "Neque enim hic de imminutione vel moderatione agitur," for it is not a diminution or modification of merit that is here in question.

Digitized by Google

in the law of works, our glorying were not excluded; but because it is of faith only, therefore we can challenge nothing to ourselves; for, [since] faith receiveth all from God, it bringeth nothing but a humble confession of need or want. And the *antithesis*, or contrariety, of faith and works is to be noted; wherein, without addition, works are put universally. Therefore, he neither intreateth of ceremonies only, nor yet of the external show of works; but comprehendeth all the merits of works which can be imagined.

The name *law* is given unto faith improperly; but yet this darkeneth not the sense of the apostle. For his meaning is, that when we are once come unto the rule of faith, then all the glory of works is overthrown; as if he should say, the righteousness of works verily is commended in the law, but faith hath a law of his own, which leaveth no righteousness in works, whatsoever they be.

28. *We have determined, therefore.* Now he gathereth the principal proposition, as though it were now out of all controversy, adding also an explication; for justification by faith is made very clear, while works are excluded by name. Therefore, our adversaries at this day labour nothing more, than that faith might be entangled with the merit of works. They confess a man is justified by faith, but not by sole faith; yea, in very deed, they place the power of justification in charity, howsoever in words they give it unto faith. But Paul, in this place, doth make justification so free, that he maketh it evident how in no sort it can stand with any merit of works. I have shown before, why he nameth the works of the law; and also, I have declared those to be ridiculous which restrain it [them] unto ceremonies. Their imagination also is childish which take the works of the law for external or literal works, which are done without the Spirit of Christ; but rather the *σπίθητον* is as much of value as if he had called them meritorious, because he hath regard unto the reward promised in the law.

Whereas James saith, a man is not justified by faith only, but by works; it is nothing contrary to the former sentence. The reconciliation dependeth chiefly upon the state of that

How St James saith a man is not justified by faith only.

Digitized by Google

argument, of the which James intreateth in that place; for, in that place, the question is not how men get unto them righteousness before God, but how they approve themselves to be just; for he refuteth hypocrites who glory vainly in the title of faith. It is, therefore, a gross fallacy not to observe how the word *justify* or *justifying* is otherwise taken with James than with Paul, as they intreat of divers things; and also the word *faith* most certainly appeareth to be equivocal, (*id est*, of *ambiguous* and doubtful signification.) This twofold *ambiguity*, or *doubtfulness*, ought to have been noted.[1] It may be gathered out of the text, that James would nothing else, than that a man is not made or approved just by a dead[2] faith, except he confirm his righteousness by works. Of which matter see our Institutions.

29. *Is God the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles also? Yea, even of the Gentiles also.*
30. *Seeing there is but one God, who shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision by faith.*

29. *Is God the God of the, &c.* The second proposition showeth, how that righteousness doth no more appertain unto the Jews than unto the Gentiles. And it was very necessary that should be urged, to the end that place might be made for the kingdom of Christ through the whole world. He doth not, therefore, ask simply, or precisely, whether God be the Maker of the Gentiles, which was known to be out of all controversy, but whether he would show himself a Saviour to them also, or no. For, after he hath matched all mankind together, and hath brought them all under the same condition; if there be any difference amongst them, it is of God, and not of themselves, which have all things like or equal amongst them. So that, if it be true that God would have all the people of the earth to be partakers of his mercy, then salvation, and righteousness, which is necessary to salvation, is extended unto all. Wherefore, under the name of *God*, here is an insinuation

The righteousness of God in Christ is not tied to one nation.

[1] "Ut de re judicium fieret," in order to decide the point, omitted.
[2] "Ficta," fictitious, omitted.

Digitized by Google

of that mutual relation which often cometh to our sight[1] in Scripture: "I will be your God, and you shall be my people." For, though God for a time did choose unto himself a peculiar people, that taketh not away the beginning[2] of nature, namely, that all men were made according to the image of God, and brought up in this world unto the hope of blessed eternity. Jer. xxx. 22.

30. *Who justifieth.* When he saith some are justified "by faith," other some "of faith," he seemeth to be delighted with the variety of speech in declaring the same matter, that he might by the way gird the folly of the Jews, who imagine a difference between them and the Gentiles, when, as in the cause of justification, there is no difference at all. For, if men be made partakers of this grace by faith only, and there is one faith in them both, it is childishness to make a variance or diversity, where there is so great a likeness. Therefore, I suppose an *irrision*[3] to be in these words, as though he should say, if any will have a difference of the Gentile from the Jew, let him take this, that the Gentile obtaineth righteousness by faith, and the Jew of faith. Unless, perhaps, you had rather distinguish thus, the Jews are justified of faith, because they are born the heirs of grace, whilst the right of adoption was given over to them of their fathers; and the Gentiles by faith, because the covenant came unto them in another sort.[4]

In the cause of justification there is no difference between the Jews and Gentiles.

31. *Do we therefore make the law void by faith? God forbid; but we establish the law.*

31. *Do we therefore, &c.* As soon as the law is opposed unto faith, the flesh straightway thereby catcheth some suspicion of repugnancy, as though one were contrary to the other. And especially this false imagination taketh place in those who, being indued with a preposterous knowledge of the law, and having left the promises, seek nothing else

[1] "Occurrit," occurs. [2] "Illud principium," that principle.
[3] "Ironiam," irony. [4] "Quia his adventitium est fœdus," because the covenant is adventitious to them.

Digitized by Google

in it than the righteousness of works. And for this cause, not only Paul, but also the Lord himself, was evil spoken of amongst the Jews; as though by his whole preaching he laboured the abrogation of the law. Whence proceeded that protestation: "I came not to destroy the law, but to
Matth. v. 17. fulfil it." And this suspicion appertained as well unto that part of the law which concerneth manners, as that which concerneth ceremonies. For, because the gospel maketh the ceremonies of Moses to cease, it is thought to tend unto the subversion of the ministry of Moses.

Moreover, because the gospel taketh away all righteousness of works, it is thought to be contrary to so many testimonies of the law, where the Lord affirmeth, that he hath prescribed in the law the way of righteousness and salvation. Wherefore, I neither understand this excuse of Paul of the ceremonies only, neither of the moral precepts only, but in
The whole law established and fulfilled in Christ, and not made void. general of the whole law. For the moral law is truly confirmed and established by faith in Christ; seeing it was given to this end, that having taught man his iniquity, it might lead him unto Christ; without whom the law itself is not performed, and in vain it preacheth what is meet to be done; neither can it do anything but stir up the lust or concupiscence more, to the end that at length it might bring upon man a greater damnation. But when we are once come unto Christ, first, there is found in him the exact righteousness of the law, which is also ours by imputation. Secondly, sanctification, whereby our hearts are framed to the observation of the law, namely, that observation which, though it be imperfect, yet aimeth to the mark. The like reason is of ceremonies, which verily cease and vanish by the coming of Christ; but in so doing they are truly confirmed. For, if they be esteemed by themselves, they are vain shadows and shows easily done away;[1] then[2] they are found to have some firmness when they respect a better end. Herein, therefore, is their chiefest confirmation, when it is taught that they have obtained their verity in Christ. Let us, therefore, remember also to preach the

[1] "Inanes sunt et umbratiles imagines," they are shadowy and empty images. [2] "Demum," only, omitted.

Digitized by Google

gospel, so that by our manner of teaching the law may be established, but yet propped up with no other stay than faith in Christ.

CHAPTER IV.

1. *What shall we say, then, that our father Abraham hath found concerning the flesh?*
2. *For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath wherein to rejoice, but not with God.*
3. *For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.*

1. *What shall we say, then.* This is a confirmation taken from an example, which is strong enough, because all things are like, as well in the matter as in the person. For both he is the father of the faithful, to whom all ought to be conformed; and, also, there is but one, not many ways, for all men to obtain righteousness by. In many other things, an example should not serve to make a common rule; but because in the person of Abraham there was proposed a mirror or pattern of righteousness, which appertaineth to the whole Church;[1] worthily, therefore, doth Paul apply that unto the whole body of the Church which was written of him only. And, also, hereby he restraineth the Jews, to whom nothing was more plausible to glory of them, to boast themselves to be the sons of Abraham. They never durst ascribe unto themselves more sanctity or holiness than unto the holy patriarch. Now, seeing it is apparent he was justified freely, his posterity, which do arrogate unto themselves their own proper righteousness out of the law, must needs for shame hold their peace.

Why the example of Abraham may be a common rule.

According to the flesh. Because, in the text of Paul, the verb *ευρηκεναι, id est,* hath found, is put between this particle

[1] "Communiter," in common.

Digitized by Google

and the name *father;* after this manner, "What shall we say Abraham our father hath found according to the flesh?" Some interpreters think here to be demanded, what Abraham hath gotten according to the flesh. Which exposition, if it be liked, then this saying, *according to the flesh*, shall be as much as naturally, or of himself. Nevertheless, it is like that it is joined unto this word *father* instead of an *epithet.* For, besides, that we are wont to be more moved with domestic examples, the dignity of pedigree, wherein the Jews gloried too much, is precisely noted again. Many think it to be added by the way of contempt; in which sense, in another place, they are called the carnal sons of Abraham, which are not spiritual, nor at all lawful. I verily suppose it was expressed for the Jews' sake only; because it was more excellent to be the sons of Abraham by nature and descent of flesh, so that they were faithful also, than to have been by adoption only. He granteth, therefore, unto the Jews a nearer bond of conjunction; but yet to this end only, that he might the rather move them, that they should not depart from the example of their father.

The bond of natural conjunction should move us rather to embrace the truth.

2. *For if Abraham.* It is an ἐπιχείρημα, that is, an imperfect argument, which ought to be gathered into this form, if Abraham be justified by works, he may glory of his merit: But he hath not wherein to glory with God; therefore he is not justified by works. So that member, *but not with God,* is the minor proposition of the syllogism. Hereunto ought to be added the conclusion which I have put down, although it is not expressed of Paul. He calleth that glorying when we may pretend something of our own, whereunto a reward is due in the sight of God. Which seeing he taketh away from Abraham, who of us shall challenge to himself the least drop of merit?

A syllogism.

What it is to glory before God.

3. *For what saith the Scripture?* This is the probation of the minor or second proposition in the former argument, where he denied Abraham to have any matter of glorying; for if Abraham were, therefore, justified because he embraced the goodness of God by faith, it followeth he had nothing to

Digitized by Google

glory of, because he brought nothing of his own but an acknowledging of his misery, which sought for mercy. For he taketh it as a thing confessed, that the righteousness of faith is the refuge, and, as it were, the privilege place[1] for a sinner that is destitute of works. For if there were any righteousness of the law or works, it should remain[2] really in men themselves; but faith borroweth that elsewhere which it hath not in itself; therefore, the righteousness of faith is fitly called *imputativa*; that is, such as is by imputation.

Furthermore, the place which is cited is taken forth of Genesis, where the word *believe*, or the word *believing*, ought not to be restrained unto any particular thing there spoken of, but unto the whole covenant of salvation and grace of adoption, which Abraham is said to have apprehended by faith. The promise, indeed, of seed or posterity to come is there rehearsed, but yet which was grounded upon the free adoption. And we are to note that neither salvation is promised without the grace of God, nor yet the grace of God without salvation. Again, we are neither called into the grace of God, nor into the hope of salvation, but righteousness is also offered.

Gen. xv. 6.

The faith of Abraham had respect unto the whole covenant of grace, and not only unto the particular promise of posterity.

This being set down, we may see they hold not the principles of divinity, which think the testimony of Moses to be violently wrested of Paul. For because there is there a particular promise, they understand Abraham to have done right and well in that he believed it, and that he was so far forth approved of God. But therein they are deceived, first, in that they mark not how that word *believe* is extended unto the whole context; wherefore it ought not to be restrained unto one member. And the chiefest error is, that they begin not at the testimony of the grace of God. But this doth God, that he might assure Abraham both of his adoption and Fatherly favour, under which eternal salvation by Christ is contained. Wherefore, Abraham, in believing, embraceth nothing but grace offered unto him, that his faith should not be void. If this be imputed unto him for righteousness, it followeth he was justified no otherwise but because he,

[1] "Asylum," asylum. [2] "Resideret," should reside.

Digitized by Google

trusting in the goodness of God, durst hope for all things from him. Neither doth Moses say what men thought of him; but how he was accounted before the judgment-seat of God. Abraham, therefore, apprehended the grace of God offered unto him in the promise, wherein he felt righteousness to be communicated to him. It is necessary for the establishing of righteousness to know this relation between the promise and faith; for there is here the same reason between God and us, that is, with the lawyers, between the giver and him to whom the thing is given;[1] for we do not otherwise obtain righteousness, but because as it is offered unto us in the promise of the gospel, so we do by faith, as it were, see the possession of it.

There is a mutual respect between faith and the promise, such as is between the giver and receiver.

How the place of James, which seemeth to be much contrary unto this, is to be reconciled, I have already shown. And there (meaning the Epistle of James) I shall (by the leave of God) declare it more at large; only let us note that they to whom righteousness is imputed are justified.

They only are justified to whom righteousness is imputed.

Seeing these two are put of Paul as words of one signification, whereby we gather the question is not what men are in themselves, but what God doth account of them; not that purity of conscience and integrity of life is separated from the free favour of God; but, for that, when the cause is demanded why God doth love us, and acknowledge us for just, Christ must needs come forth, who may clothe us with his righteousness.

4. *For to him verily that worketh, reward is imputed not of grace or favour, but of debt.*

5. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

Who is called a worker, and who a non-worker.

4. *For to him that worketh.* He calleth him a worker; not every one that is addicted unto good works, which study ought to flourish in all the sons of God, but him that deserveth something by his merits; likewise he counteth him

[1] "Quoniam eadem est hic inter Deum et nos ratio quæ apud jurisconsultos inter datorem et donatarium," since there is here, between God and us, the same relation that there is, according to lawyers, between the donor and the donatary.

Digitized by Google

a non-worker, or one that worketh not, to whom nothing is due by the merit of works. Neither is his meaning that he would have the faithful unprofitable, or idle loiterers; but he forbiddeth them only to be hirelings, who, whatsoever they ask of God, they crave it as of right due unto them. And we have already admonished, how the question is not here, after what sort we should frame our life, but the question is of the cause of salvation. And he reasoneth from the contrary, that God doth not pay unto us righteousness as of debt; but doth frankly give it unto us, that we might ascribe it to him. And I truly am of Bucer's mind, who showeth the form of reasoning, not to be drawn from one word, but from a whole sentence, after this manner, If there be any that meriteth anything by his work, the thing merited is not imputed to him of grace, but is paid unto him as of debt or duty. Faith is counted unto righteousness, not as though it brought any merit from us, but because it apprehendeth the goodness of God. Therefore is righteousness no debt unto us, but given us freely; for, because Christ, at our prayer or suit,[1] doth justify us by faith, Paul doth always therein consider our evacuation or emptiness; for, what do we believe, but Christ to be the satisfaction for our sins, that he might reconcile us to God? The same, though in other words, is in the Epistle to the Galatians, "that no man is justified by the law it is evident: for, The just by faith shall live. But the law is not of faith; but, He that shall do these shall live in them." For, because the law promiseth wages unto works, thereupon he concludeth the righteousness of faith which is free, not to agree with that of works; which cannot hold if faith do justify in respect of works. These comparisons are diligently to be observed, wherein all merit is utterly done away.

How faith is counted for righteousness.

Gal. iii. 11.

5. *But believeth in him.* This a circumlocution very significant, wherein he expresseth the substance and nature of faith and righteousness; for he concludeth plainly, that faith doth justify us not as though it were a meritorious virtue,

[1] "Precario," of his mere pleasure.

Digitized by Google

but so far forth as it obtaineth for us the grace of God. Neither doth he only pronounce God the giver of righteousness, but also condemneth us of unrighteousness, that the liberality of God might help our necessity. To be brief, none shall come unto the righteousness of faith, but he that is a sinner in himself; for this circumlocution is to be applied unto the circumstance of the place, that faith doth adorn us with the righteousness of another, which righteousness it beggeth of God. And here, again, God is said to justify us, while he doth freely pardon us, being sinners, and doth love us,[1] with whom he might justly be angry, namely, while by his mercy he doth away our unrighteousness.

Faith adorneth us with the righteousness of Christ, which it beggeth of God.

6. *Even as David declareth the blessedness of* [the] *man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; saying,*
7. *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*
8. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sin.*

6. *As David, &c.* Here we may see they do but cavil which would hem in the works of the law within the compass of ceremonies; seeing he now calleth them simply, and without any addition, *works*, which he called before the works of the law. If no man can deny but a simple and unlimited speech, such as we have now in hand, is indifferently to be understood of every work, the same must always hold in the whole disputation; for there is nothing less reasonable than to take the power or force of justification away from ceremonies only, seeing Paul doth indefinitely exclude works. Hereunto appertaineth the contrary member, that God doth justify men by not imputing their sin. In which words, also, we are taught that righteousness with Paul is nothing else than the remission of sins. Lastly, that this remission is free, because it is imputed without works; which the very name of remission showeth. For that creditor or lender which is paid doth not remit, but he which willingly, of mere liberality, doth cancel or raze out the debt. Away now with those who teach us to redeem par-

As works are here taken indefinitely for all works, so in the whole disputation.

[1] "Amore dignatur," deigns or condescends to love us.

Digitized by Google

don of our sins by satisfactions; from which remission of sins Paul fetcheth an argument to establish the free gift of righteousness. For, how is it possible they should agree with Paul? They say, By works we must satisfy the justice of God, that we may obtain pardon of our sins. On the contrary, Paul reasoneth that the righteousness of faith is free and without works, because it dependeth upon the remission of sins. This were undoubtedly a false argument, if, in the remission of sins, there were any regard or respect unto works at all.

In like sort, by the same words of the Prophet, the folly of the schoolmen is refuted touching half remission. They babble, that the fault being remitted, the punishment is retained of God; but the Prophet crieth, that our sins are not only covered, that is, taken away in the sight of God, but also, he addeth, they are not imputed. How shall God take punishment of those sins he doth not impute? therefore, there remaineth sound unto us this most excellent sentence, he is justified by faith who is purged or cleansed before God by the free remission of his sins. Moreover, hence may be gathered the perpetual continuance of free righteousness, or justification through the whole life. For when David, being wearied with the continual sting of his conscience, burst forth into this saying, he spake surely by his own experience. And now, also, he had served God many years. Therefore, after great proceedings, or goings forward, at length he proved it by experience true, that all they are miserable which are cited before the judgment-seat of God; crying out, there is none other way to obtain blessedness, than if the Lord receive us into favour by not imputing our sins. Whereby the imagination of those is very well refuted, who dream that the righteousness of faith is but the entrance, so that[1] the faithful, by works, retain the possession of righteousness, which righteousness they did not obtain by any merits.

God forgiveth not only the fault, but also the punishment.

Righteousness not only begun, but also continued by faith.

Whereas sometimes works are said to be imputed unto righteousness, and also other beatitudes are reckoned that

[1] "Deinde," thereafter, omitted.

Digitized by Google

doth nothing prejudice the sentence of Paul; the Psal. cvi. 31, saith, it was imputed for righteousness unto Phinehas, the priest of the Lord, that in taking punishment upon the adulterer and the harlot, he took away the reproach of Israel. Indeed, we hear in this place how a man did a good work; but we know a man is not justified for one deed; for there is required a perfect and most absolute obedience, as the promise saith, "He that shall do these shall live in them." How then is this punishment of Phinehas imputed unto him for righteousness? surely it must needs be he was justified before by the grace of God. For they which have put on the righteousness of Christ have God not only favourable to themselves, but also to their works; whose spots and moles are covered with the purity of Christ, that they come not into judgment; whereby works being infected with no corruptions are counted just; and that no work of man can any otherwise than by this favour please God, it is evident. And if the righteousness of faith be the only cause why our works are counted just, see, then, how sottishly they reason, because righteousness is given to works, it is not of faith only. But I oppose an invincible argument against them, namely, that all works are condemned for unrighteousness, except a man be justified solely by faith.

Ps. cvi. 31.

Levit. xviii. 5.

How righteousness is sometimes given unto works.

The like is to be understood of blessedness. They are denounced blessed who fear the Lord and walk in his ways; who meditate in his law day and night; but because no man doth that in such perfection as were meet, that the commandment of God might be fully satisfied, all such blessedness is void and of none effect, until that we, being purified and cleansed by the remission of sins, be made blessed, and so are made capable of that blessedness which the Lord promiseth for his servants for the study of the law and good works. Therefore, both righteousness of works is an effect of the righteousness of faith, and the blessedness which cometh of works an effect of the blessedness which consisteth in the remission of sins. If the cause neither ought nor can be destroyed of its effect, they go ill-favouredly to work, if any go about to overthrow the right-

Ps. cxxviii. 1.

Ps. i. 2.

Digitized by Google

eousness of faith by works. But why may not a man, (will some say,) by those testimonies, contend to prove a man to be justified and also made blessed through works; for the words of the Scripture say no more that a man is justified by faith, and made blessed by the mercy of God, than by works. Verily here, as well the order of causes as the dispensation of the grace of God, is to be considered. For, because, whatsoever is spoken either of the righteousness or blessedness of works, it taketh no place, unless this sole righteousness of faith go before, and only fulfil all parts; this must be reared up and established, that the other, as fruit from a tree, may grow and come forth of it.

Objection.

Answer.

9. *Came this blessedness, then, upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was imputed unto Abraham for righteousness.*
10. *How was it then imputed? when he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not when he was circumcised, but when he was uncircumcised.*

Because there is mention made of circumcision and uncircumcision only, some foolishly gather there is nothing else in question than that righteousness is not obtained by the ceremonies of the law. But we are to note with what sort of men Paul hath to deal; for we know that hypocrites, while in general they boast their meritorious works, yet they pretend a colour in external works. The Jews also, which, through the gross abuse of the law, were alienated from true and perfect righteousness, had their peculiar reason. Paul said, No man is blessed, but he whom God, by his free mercy, reconcileth to himself; whereby it followeth all they are cursed whose works come into judgment. Now, this principle is holden, that men are not justified by their worthiness, but by the mercy of God. But yet that is not enough, except remission of sins go before all works, of the which circumcision is the first, whereby the people of the Jews were ingrafted into the obedience of God. Wherefore, he goeth on in showing that also. We are always to bear this one thing in mind, that circumcision is reckoned here as the inceptive work (if I may so term it) of the legal righteousness;

Digitized by Google

How the Jews gloried in circumcision.

for the Jews did not glory in it, as in the pledge or seal[1] of the grace of God, but as in a meritorious observation or keeping of the law. Therefore, they preferred themselves before others, as though they were more excellent than others in the sight of God. Now, we see the controversy is not of one rite; but under one kind are all the works of the law, that is, all works to the which wages can be due, comprehended. And for this cause, chiefly, is circumcision named, because it was the foundation of legal righteousness. But Paul disputeth from the contrary, if the righteousness of Abraham be the remission of sins, (which he bodily[2] taketh for a thing granted,) and the same remission of sins came unto Abraham before circumcision; then it followeth the remission of sins was not given in regard of merits going before. Thou seest it is an argument drawn from the order of the causes and the effects; for the cause is ever before its effect. But righteousness was in Abraham before circumcision.

11. *After he received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith, which was in the uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all them* [who] *do believe by uncircumcision, wherein righteousness is also imputed to them.*

12. *And the father of circumcision, not unto them only which are of the circumcision, but unto them also that walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had when he was uncircumcised.*

Though circumcision justified not, yet was it not in vain.

11. *After he received the sign.* By the way of anticipation, [or preventing,] he declareth, that though circumcision justified not, yet was it not in vain or superfluous; seeing it had another, and the same a very excellent use, namely, whose office was to seal the righteousness of faith, and, as it were, to make it sure. And yet in the meanwhile, from the end itself he insinuateth unto us, that it is not the cause of righteousness; for it tendeth unto the confirmation of the righteousness of faith, yea, and of that verily which was had in uncircumcision; therefore, it derogateth or taketh nothing from it.

Moreover, here we have a notable place, concerning the

[1] "Symbolo," symbol. [2] "Secure," freely.

Digitized by Google

common use of sacraments; for they are (as Paul witnesseth) seals, whereby both the promises of God are after a sort sealed in our hearts, and the certitude of the grace of God established. And although they profit nothing by themselves, yet God, who would have them to be instruments of his grace, doth make that they want not a secret grace and profit in the elect. And although they are unto the reprobate only dead and unprofitable figures, yet they always retain their virtue and nature; for, albeit our incredulity deprive us of their effect, yet it shaketh not, neither extinguisheth the truth of God. Wherefore, let us stand sure, that the holy sacraments are testimonies wherewithal God sealeth his grace in our hearts.

The common use of sacraments.

Touching the sacrament of circumcision, this is to be said in particular, therein was a twofold grace represented. God promised to Abraham a blessed seed, wherein both he and all the world should hope for health.[1] Hereupon depended that promise, "I will be thy God." Therefore, the free reconciliation in God was included in that sign; and the analogy or proportion served that the faithful might respect the promised seed. Again, God required integrity and holiness of life. By the sacrament he declared how it might be come unto, namely, if in man that be cut off whatsoever cometh of the flesh, because the whole nature of man is corrupted. By the external sign, therefore, he admonished Abraham that he should spiritually circumcise the corruption of his flesh, whereunto also Moses alluded. And that he might show it was not the work of man but of God, he would have tender infants circumcised, who, for want of years, could not as yet execute that commandment. For, that spiritual circumcision is an effect or work of the celestial power, Moses hath spoken [of,] as you have in Deuteronomy, "The Lord shall circumcise thy heart." The prophets also afterward declared the very same more clearly.

Gen. xvii. 7.

Deut. x. 16.

Deut. xxx. 6.

As circumcision in old time, so baptism at this day, is a sign of a twofold grace, namely, of the remission of sins and sanctification.

Finally, as at this day baptism, so in old time circumcision, consisted of two parts; namely, that therein was testified as well newness of life as the remission of sins; but whereas in the person of Abraham circumcision was after righteous-

[1] "Salus," salvation.

Digitized by Google

ness, that holdeth not always in the sacraments; as it appeareth in Isaac and his posterity; but God would once, at the beginning, show forth such an example, lest any should tie salvation unto the external signs.

That he might be the father. Note how the circumcision of Abraham confirmeth our faith concerning free righteousness; for it is a sealing of the righteousness of faith, that to us also which do believe righteousness might be imputed; and so very artificially Paul returneth those things upon the adversaries, which might be objected for them; for if the truth and virtue of circumcision be found in uncircumcision, there is no cause why the Jews should so greatly advance themselves above the Gentiles.

Objection. But seeing a doubt might arise, whether we also, after the example of Abraham, are not to confirm the same righteousness by the seal of circumcision, why did the apostle Answer. omit it? Namely, because he thought the question to have been sufficiently answered by his words. For seeing this sentence is admitted, that circumcision serveth only to seal the grace of God, it followeth that at this day it were superfluous for us, who have another sacrament[1] ordained of the Lord in place thereof. Because, therefore, where baptism is, there is no use now of circumcision, he would not to no purpose dispute of that whereof was no question at all, to wit, why the righteousness of faith should not be sealed in the Gentiles by circumcision, if they should be like unto Abraham.

To believe by circumcision is, that the Gentiles, being content with their estate, are not to interpose the seal of circumcision; and so this preposition διὰ, by, is put instead of ἐν, in.

12. *Not to them which are, &c.* This word, *are*, or *be*, in this place, is taken for *to be reckoned* or *counted;* for he checketh the carnal sons of Abraham, who, having nothing but external circumcision, did boldly glory in it. As for the other, which is the principal, they neglected it; namely,

[1] "Signum," sign.

Digitized by Google

that they should imitate the faith of Abraham, by which only he obtained health. Hereby may appear how seriously he discerneth faith from the sacrament; not only lest any should content himself with this, without the other, meaning with the sacrament without faith, as though it were sufficient to justification; but also that the same faith only might fulfil all parts; for while he confesseth the Jews which are circumcised to be justified, he doth precisely except, so that they, after the example of Abraham, abide in faith only:[1] for what should be the meaning of faith in uncircumcision, but that he might show faith only, without any help elsewhere, to be sufficient? It is, therefore, to be taken heed of, lest any man, by dividing or parting in halves, mix together two causes of justification. By the same argument, the school divinity[2] is convicted, touching the difference of the sacraments of the Old and New Testaments; for from those they take away the power of justifying, to these they give it; but if Paul reason orderly, while he proveth that circumcision justifieth not, because Abraham was justified by faith; the same reason is also of strength with us, that we may deny men to be justified by baptism, seeing they are justified by the same faith, by the which Abraham was justified.

The circumcised Jews were not otherwise justified than as they believed the promise of grace.

13. *For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not given to Abraham and his seed by the law, but by the righteousness of faith.*

13. *For the promise, &c.* Now, he doth more clearly repeat that antithesis, or contrariety of the law and faith, which he touched before, which also is diligently to be noted, because if faith borrow nothing of the law, yet it might justify; thence we understand it hath respect unto nothing but the mercy of God.

Furthermore, the imagination of those which would have

[1] "Disserte excipit, modo in fide nuda insistant Abrahæ exemplo," he does it expressly with this proviso, that, after the example of Abraham, they stand by mere faith.

[2] "Revincitur scholasticum dogma," is refuted the scholastic dogma.

Digitized by Google

this to be spoken of ceremonies is easily refuted, because, if works brought any thing unto justification, then he should rather have said, not by the written law, but by the law of nature.

But Paul doth not oppose spiritual holiness of life against ceremonies, but faith and his [its] righteousness. The sum, therefore, is, The inheritance was promised to Abraham, not because he had deserved it by keeping the law, but because by faith he had obtained righteousness. And surely (as Paul straightway declareth) then[1] do the consciences of men enjoy perfect peace, when they feel that to be freely given them which is not due unto them by right. Hereupon, also, it followeth, that the benefit is no less common to the Gentiles than to the Jews, the cause of which benefit doth equally appertain unto both; for if men's salvation be founded upon the only goodness of God, they restrain and hinder the course thereof, as much as in them lieth, who exclude the Gentiles from it.

Salvation in Christ appertaineth no less unto the Gentiles than unto the Jews.

That he might be the heir of the world. Seeing eternal salvation is now in hand, the apostle seemeth out of season to carry the readers unto the world; but generally under this word he comprehendeth (the instauration or) restoring which was looked for in Christ. Indeed, restitution of life was the principal, yet it behoved that the decayed state of the whole world should be repaired. Therefore, the apostle calleth Christ the heir of all the goods of God, because the adoption which we obtain through his grace hath restored unto us the possession of that inheritance from the which we fell in Adam; and, because under the type of the land of Canaan, not only the hope of eternal life was proposed unto Abraham, but also the full and perfect blessing of God, the apostle very aptly teacheth that the dominion of the world was promised unto him. The godly, in this present life, have a certain taste hereof, because, howsoever they are at divers times pinched with poverty, yet, for that with a quiet conscience they participate those things which God hath created to their use, and with his favour and

What is meant by the word "world."

Heb. i. 2.

Poverty letteth not, but the faithful may be called the heirs of the world.

[1] "Demum," only, omitted.

Digitized by Google

will enjoin the earthly blessings, as pledges and earnest-pennies of eternal life, poverty is no let unto them, wherefore they should not acknowledge heaven, earth, and the sea, to belong unto them.

The wicked, albeit they heap up the riches of the world, they can call nothing theirs; but rather they get them by stealth, because they use them with the curse of God; and it is great comfort to the godly, in their poverty, that though they live poorly, yet they steal nothing from any; but they receive their lawful commons, (or allowance,) at the hand of their heavenly Father, until they see the full possession of their inheritance, when all creatures shall serve for their glory; for to this end both earth and heaven shall be renewed, that, according to their measure, they might partly serve to illustrate the kingdom of God.

14. *For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect.*
15. *For the law causeth wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression.*

14. *For if they which are of the law.* By an argument taken from that [which] is impossible or absurd, he proveth that that grace which Abraham obtained of God, was not promised unto him in regard of the legal pact, or in respect of works: for if this condition had been interposed, that God would vouchsafe to adopt those only which deserve it, or which keep the law, no man should have durst to believe that it appertaineth unto him; for what man findeth such perfection in himself, that he dare resolve himself, the inheritance is due unto him by righteousness of the law; then were faith made void, because an impossible condition doth not only hold the minds of men in suspense, and maketh them doubtful; but also doth smite them with fear and trembling; so the effect of the promises should vanish away, because they profit nothing except they be received by faith. If our adversaries had ears to hearken to this one reason, then should the controversy between them and us easily come to an end. The apostle taketh it for a thing out of all question, that the promises of God cannot be effec-

Digitized by Google

If salvation were grounded upon the keeping of the law, then neither should men's consciences be at peace, neither the promise have effect.

tual, except we receive them with sure affiance of mind; and what should come to pass if the salvation of man were grounded upon the keeping of the law? The consciences should have no certainty, but being vexed with a perpetual unquietness, at length shall fall to desperation. The promise, also, whose performance dependeth upon an impossible thing, should vanish away without fruit. Let them go now which teach the wretched people to save themselves by works, seeing Paul doth plainly pronounce that the promise is made of none effect if it depend upon works; but that [what] is very necessary to be known, faith is made void if it stand upon works; for thereby we both learn what faith is, and what kind of righteousness that righteousness of works ought to be whereunto men may boldly trust.

What faith is.

The apostle teacheth that faith doth perish unless the soul rest securely in the goodness of God. Faith, then, is not either a naked knowledge of God, or of his truth; neither a simple persuasion that God is, that his word is truth itself; but a sure knowledge of the mercy of God conceived by the gospel, which sure knowledge bringeth the peace and rest of conscience towards God. The sum, therefore, is, that if salvation rested in the observation of the law, the mind of man could have no certainty thereof; yea, what promises soever were offered us of God, they should be void and of none effect. So miserable and wretched are we, if we be turned over unto works, while the cause and certainty of salvation is to be sought for.

15. *For the law, &c.* This is a confirmation of the former sentence, taken from the contrary effect of the law; for, seeing the law begetteth nothing but vengeance, it cannot bring grace. To those who were good and perfect, it would show the way of righteousness;[1] but inasmuch as it commandeth those [who] are sinful and corrupt what they ought to do, and ministereth not strength to perform the same, it proveth them guilty before the judgment-seat of God. For such is the corruption of our nature, that the more we are

The law, by reason of our corruption, begetteth nothing but vengeance.

[1] "Vitæ," of life.

Digitized by Google

taught what is just and right, the more plainly is our iniquity discovered, and chiefly our disobedience;[1] and so the greater judgment of God is procured. By *wrath*, understand the judgment of God, in which signification it is often used. They which understand it, that the wrath of the sinner is inflamed by the law, because he hateth and curseth the lawgiver, whom he seeth to be adversant to his lusts, they say that wittily, but yet unfitly, in respect of the present place; for, that Paul would not any thing else but show how nothing except condemnation cometh unto us all by the law, both the common use of the word, and also the reason which he addeth straightway, doth declare.

Wrath for judgment.

Where there is no law. The second proof whereby he confirmeth that which he said; for otherwise it would have been obscure how the *wrath of God* should be kindled against us by the law, unless the reason were more apparent. And that is, because we, having tasted the knowledge of the justice of God by the law, offend so much the more grievously against God, as there remaineth less excuse unto us; for they are worthy to sustain more grievous punishment which despise the known will of God, than they [who] sin[2] of ignorance. The apostle speaketh not of the simple transgression of righteousness, from the which no man is exempted; but he calleth that transgression, when a man's mind, being taught what doth please or displease God, doth wittingly and willingly burst the bounds prescribed unto him by the Word of God. And that I may speak in a word, transgression here doth not signify a simple offence, but a purposed stubbornness in violating justice. I take this particle ου adverbially, to wit, *for where*. Others turn it *whereof*, as though it were a pronoun relative; but the first reading agreeth best, which is also most received. Whether reading soever you follow, the same sense abideth, namely, that he who is not instructed by the written law, if he offend, is not guilty of so great transgression as he[3] who stubbornly infringeth and breaketh the law of God.

The more knowledge men have, the more heinous is their transgression.

[1] "Contumacia," contumacy. [2] "Quam qui ignorantia impingunt," than these who run counter to it through ignorance. [3] "Convincitur," is convicted of, omitted.

Digitized by Google

16. *Therefore it is by faith, that it* might come *by grace, and the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but also to that which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written,*

Gen. xvii. 4. 17. *I have made thee a father of many nations,) even before God, whom he believed, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*

16. *Therefore it is of faith.* This is the winding up of the argument, so that you may gather the whole into this sum, If the inheritance of salvation come unto us by works, then shall the faith thereof fall, the promise of it shall be of none effect; but both these must be sure. Therefore, it cometh unto us by faith, that the firmness thereof being founded upon the only goodness of God, it might have a sure effect. See how the apostle, esteeming faith by firm and stable certainty, doth count doubting and wavering for incredulity, whereby both faith is abolished and the promise abrogated. And yet this is that doubting which the schoolmen term moral conjecture; and (if it please God[1]) they put it instead of faith.

True faith excludeth wavering and doubting.

That it might come by grace. Here, first, the apostle showeth, that nothing is set before faith[2] but mere grace; and this is, as they commonly term it, his [its] object. For if it respected merits, wrongfully should the apostle infer that that is of free grace whatsoever faith obtaineth for us of God. I will repeat it again in other words, If it be of grace whatsoever we obtain by faith, then all respect of works doth lie dead. But that which followeth next doth more clearly remove all ambiguity or doubtfulness, namely, that the promise then[3] standeth firm when it leaneth upon grace; for by this word Paul confirmeth, that so long as men depend upon works they are in suspense or doubt, because they deprive themselves of the fruit of the promises. Here, also, we may easily gather, that grace is not (as some imagine) taken for the gift of regeneration, but for free mercy or favour; for as regeneration is never perfect, so should it

The grace of God is the object of faith.

[1] "Et (si Deo placet,") and which, (so help them!) is proposed to. [2] "Proponi," "Demum," only, omitted.

Digitized by Google

never suffice to appease the consciences, neither by itself should it make the promise firm.

Not to that only which is of the law. Whereas this clause elsewhere doth signify those who, being preposterously zealous of the law, tie themselves to the yoke thereof, and glory in confidence of it; here it signifieth simply the nation of the Jews, to whom the law of the Lord was delivered. For whosoever abide under the power of the law, Paul in another place teacheth, they are subject to the curse; and, therefore, it is certain they are excluded from the participation of grace; he meaneth not then the servants of the law, who, being addicted to the righteousness of works, renounce Christ, but the Jews, who, being brought up in the law, gave their name to Christ.[1] But that this sentence may be more clear, resolve it thus: *Not to them only which are of the law, but to all those which follow the faith of Abraham, although they had no law before.*

Those Jews, who, being brought up in the law, renounce their own righteousness, and cleave unto Christ, are delivered; the residue abide under the curse.

Who is the father of us all. The relative hath the force of a causal particle; for thereby he goeth about to prove the Gentiles to be partakers of this grace; because, by the same oracle, wherein the inheritance was given to Abraham and his seed, the Gentiles were received[2] into his stead. For it is said, he is ordained to be the father, not of one, but of many nations; wherein was prefigured the dispensation of the grace to come, which then was contained in[3] Israel only; for, unless the promised blessing were extended unto them, they could not be reckoned amongst the seed of Abraham. The preter tense of the verb, according to the common use of the Scripture, noteth the certainty of the counsel of God. For although nothing appeared then less,[4] yet, because God had so ordained, he is truly said to be appointed the father of many nations. Let the testimony of Moses be included in a parenthesis, that this sentence may be joined, *Who is the father of us all before God, &c.* For it was necessary also to show what was the form of that consanguinity or kindred, lest the Jews should glory too much in their carnal genera-

How Abraham is the father of many nations.

[1] "Dabant nomen Christo," assumed the Christian name. [2] "In ejus semen fuerunt accitæ," were called into his seed. [3] "Intra," within. [4] "Nam etsi nihil tunc minus apparebat," for though at the time nothing was less apparent.

Digitized by Google

tion. He saith, therefore, Abraham is our father *before God*, which is as much as if he should call him a spiritual father; for he hath that privilege not from his own flesh, but from the promise of God.

The substance of Abraham's faith.

17. *Whom he believed, who quickeneth the dead.* In this circumlocution the very substance of Abraham's faith is declared, that from his example he might pass unto the Gentiles; for Abraham was to come unto that promise which he had heard from the mouth of God, by a wonderful way, seeing there appeared as yet no token thereof. Seed was promised to him as unto one that had been lusty and lively; but he was dead. Therefore it lay upon him to have his cogitation erected[1] unto that power of God, whereby he quickeneth those that are dead, Now, there is no absurdity if the Gentiles, which otherwise are barren and dead, be incorporate into the society; for he who therefore denieth them to be capable of grace doth injury unto Abraham, whose faith did lean upon this cogitation, that it mattereth not though he be dead who is called of the Lord unto life; who can easily, by his word, through his power, raise the dead.

While the Lord calleth us unto life, there is no spark of goodness in us; we are as a dead and dried tree. But this is no matter with God, who can easily raise the dead.

Moreover, here we have a type and example of our universal calling, wherein our original, or rising, is set before our eyes; not that original, or rising, whereby we grow up to the first nativity, but whereby we grow up into the hope of the life to come; namely, that while we are called of the Lord, we arise up out of nothing; for, whatsoever we seem to be, yet have we not any spark of goodness, whereby we might be made apt for the kingdom of God; for, that we may be rather meet to hear the calling of the Lord, we must utterly die unto ourselves.

This is the condition of calling, that they which are dead in themselves might be raised up of the Lord; they which are nothing, by his virtue, may begin to be something. The word calling ought not to be restrained unto preaching, but according to the usual manner of the Scripture, it is taken for to raise up; and the rather to set forth the power of God, who, by a beck only, can raise up whom he will.

[1] "Erigi cogitationem," his thought raised.

Digitized by Google

18. *Who, above* [against] *hope, believed under* [above] *hope, that he should be the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken to him, So shall thy seed be.*

18. *Who, besides hope.* If it be read so, the sense shall be, when there was no argument, yea, when all things were contrary, yet ceased he not to believe. And surely there is no greater enemy unto faith, than to tie our minds to our eyes, that from their sight we might take the matter of hoping.

It may also be read, *above hope*, and perhaps more fitly; as though he said that Abraham, by his faith, did far exceed, or go beyond, whatsoever he could conceive; for, unless faith by celestial wings fly up, that it might despise all the senses of the flesh, it shall always stick in the clay of the world. And whereas Paul useth the word *hope* twice in the same sentence; in the first place, it signifieth that argument of hoping, which may be taken from nature, and the reason of the flesh; in the second place, it signifieth faith given of God, in this sense, when there was no matter of hoping, yet, through hope, he depended upon the promise of God; and to hope, he thought it sufficient that the Lord had promised, howsoever the thing was in itself incredible.

Hope put for the matter of hoping.

Hope put for trust in God's promise.

According to that was said. I thought good to turn it so, that it might be referred unto the time of Abraham; for the meaning of Paul is, that Abraham, when many temptations would have driven him unto desperation, lest he should faint, converted his mind unto that was promised to him, "Thy seed shall be like the stars of heaven, and sands of the sea;" for purposely he alleged this testimony but in part, that he might stir them to the reading of the Scripture; for the Apostles everywhere, in citing Holy Scripture, have a religious care to provoke us to the diligent reading thereof.

19. *And he, not weak in the faith, considered not his own body, which was now dead, being almost an hundred years old: neither the deadness of Sarah's womb.*

20. *Neither did he doubt of the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in the faith, and gave glory to God.*

Digitized by Google

21. *Being full assured, that he which had promised was also able to do it.*

22. *Therefore was it imputed to him for righteousness.*

19. *And he, not weak in faith.* If you had rather one of the negatives being left out, you may declare it thus, and he, not *weak in faith, considered his own body;* but this maketh nothing for the sense. Now, he showeth more nearly what might have hindered, yea, what might have utterly turned Abraham from receiving the promise. Seed was promised to him,[1] when, by nature, neither he was fit for generation, nor Sarah for conception. Whatsoever he could see in himself, or about himself, it was against the effect of the promise. Therefore, that he might give place unto the truth of God, as though he had forgot himself, he withdraweth his mind from those things [which] were in his sight. Yet you are not to understand it, as though he had no respect at all to his barren or dead body. Seeing the Scripture testifieth, he reasoned thus with himself, "Shall a child be born to a man that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, which is ninety, bear a child?" but, because that consideration being laid apart, he resigned his whole sense over to the Lord. The apostle saith, he considered not. And surely it was an argument of greater constancy, to draw[2] his cogitation from that thing which did voluntarily offer itself to his eyes, than if no such thing had come into his mind. And that the body of Abraham for age was past fruit, before the blessing of the Lord, it may plainly be proved both here, and also out of the 17th and 18th chapters of Genesis. So that the opinion of Augustine is in no wise to be admitted, who, in a certain place, thinketh that the cause[3] was only in Sarah. Neither ought the absurdity of the objection move us, which drove him [Augustine] unto that resolution. He thinketh it very ridiculous, that Abraham, at an hundred years, should be called barren, who some time after had many children. For thereby the Lord made his power more notable, that he which before was like a withered and dry post, when, through the blessing of God,

What thing might have hindered the faith of Abraham.

Gen. xvii. and xviii.

[1] "Ex Sara," by Sarah.
[2] "Distrahere," to draw off.
[3] "Impedimentum," impediment.

Digitized by Google

he flourished, he was not only sufficient for the procreation of Isaac, but, as one restored unto a flourishing age, he had strength afterwards to beget others. But some will say, it is not beside the order of nature that a man should beget a child at that age. That[1] I may grant it is not a wonder, yet it differeth little from a miracle. Consider also with what labours, molestations, peregrinations, and extremities, that good man was exercised all his life; and then you must needs confess he was no more broken with age, than he was worn and wasted with labours. Lastly, his body is not simply, but by the way of comparison, called barren or fruitless; for it was not like that he, which, in the flower and strength of age, was unfit for procreation, should then begin when he was void of strength.

Whereas he saith, he *was not weak in faith*, understand it thus, he did not shake or waver, as we are wont to do in doubtful things. For there is a twofold weakness of faith, one which, by yielding to temptations of adversity,[2] doth make us fall from the power [grace] of God; another which ariseth verily of imperfection, yet doth it not extinguish faith. For the intellect is never so illuminated, but there remain many reliques of ignorance; the mind is never so stablished, but there abideth much doubting. The faithful, therefore, have a continual conflict with those vices of the flesh, namely, ignorance and doubting; in which conflict their faith is oftentimes grievously assaulted, and put in hazard, yet at the length it overcometh; so that they may be called firm, even in infirmity.

A twofold weakness of faith.

20. *Neither did he doubt of the promise of God.* Although I follow not the old interpreter and Erasmus, yet my translation hath his [its] reason. For it seemeth the apostle would say, that Abraham examined not in the balance of incredulity, whether the Lord could perform that [what] he promised. To make inquisition of a thing is properly, when we sift it with mistrust; neither will we admit it before it be thoroughly examined, where it appeareth credible. Indeed, he demanded how it might come to pass; but that was an interrogation of

Abraham asked how it might come to pass, not because he doubted, but because he wondered.

[1] "Ut," though. [2] "Tentationibus adversis," to adverse temptations.

Digitized by Google

one wondering; as the Virgin Mary, when she demanded of the angel how that might come to pass, which he showed unto her, and such like. The godly, therefore, while a message is brought unto them of the works of God, whose greatness exceedeth their capacity, they burst forth into admiration; but from the admiration they pass straightway to the consideration of the power of God; the wicked, while they demand, they scoff and deride, and reject it as a fable. As you may see in the Jews, while they ask Christ how he could give his flesh to be eaten.

Therefore, Abraham is not reprehended for that he laughed, and demanded how a son should be born to a man of an hundred, and a woman of ninety years old; because, in his admiration, he nevertheless gave place to the power of the word of God. On the contrary, the like laughter and question is reproved in Sarah, because she charged the promise of God with vanity. If these things be applied to the present cause, it shall appear there was no other original of Abraham's justification than there is of the Gentiles. The Jews, then, are contumelious against their father, if they gainsay the calling of the Gentiles, as though it were absurd.

That we may believe the promises of God, we must turn our eyes from ourselves to consider the power and truth of God.

Let us also remember, how all of us are in the same predicament with Abraham. The things about us are all adversant to the promises of God. He promiseth immortality; and we are clothed with mortality and corruption. He pronounceth that he accounteth us for just; we are covered with sins. He testifieth that he is merciful and benevolent to us; his external judgments threaten his wrath. What shall we do, then? With closed eyes we must pass over ourselves and all that is ours, that nothing hinder or let us, wherefore we should not believe that God is true.

But he was strong. This is opposed against that sentence which went before, where it was said, he was not weak in faith; as if he should have said, through constancy and firmness of faith he overcame incredulity. For none shall go a conqueror out of this field but he who shall borrow weapons and strength out of the Word of God. Whereas, he addeth, that he gave *glory to God*, therein we are to note,

Digitized by Google

there can no greater honour be given unto God than whilst by faith we subscribe his truth; as, again, there is no greater contumely can be done against him than whilst the grace he offereth is refused, or authority is taken from his Word. Wherefore, this is the chiefest point of his worship, obediently to embrace his promises; and true religion beginneth at faith.

No greater honour to God than to subscribe his truth.

21. *He which had promised was also able to perform.* Because all men acknowledge the power of God, Paul seemeth to say no excellent thing of the faith of Abraham; but experience teacheth, there is nothing more rare or difficult than to give the honour which is due to the power of God. For there is no let or hinderance, so small or light, whereby flesh and blood imagineth not that the hand of God may be driven from his work. Hereupon it cometh, that in the least temptations whatsoever the promises of God slide from us. Out of controversy, no man denieth God can do all; yet as soon as any thing is objected which may hinder the course of God's promises, we throw down the power of God from his state. Wherefore, to the end it might obtain his [its] right and honour amongst us, when we happen upon some comparison we must needs determine thus: That the power of God is no less sufficient to overcome all impediments or hinderances, than the shine of the sun is of force to disperse the clouds. We are wont to excuse, that we derogate nothing from the power of God, as often as we doubt of his promises; namely, because this imagination, to wit, (that God hath promised more in his Word than he is able to perform, which were open perversity and blasphemy against God,) is not the cause of doubting, but that same defect which we feel in ourselves. But we do not sufficiently advance the power of God, unless we think the same to be greater than our weakness. Faith, therefore, ought not to consider our own imbecility, misery, and defect, but wholly to intend upon the only power of God. For, if righteousness should depend upon our worthiness, it would never scale unto the consideration of the power

By comparison is meant the applying or setting of the power of God against all his impediments.

Digitized by Google

of God. And this is the examination[1] of incredulity, of the which he spake lately, when we measure the power of the Lord by our own foot. Neither doth faith so imagine God to be able to do whatsoever he will, that in the meanwhile it leaveth him sitting idly; but rather doth place his power in continual action. And, specially, it applieth the same power unto the effect of his Word, that the hand of God might be always ready to execute whatsoever he hath uttered by his mouth. I marvel why the relative masculine did please Erasmus; for, although the sense be not thereby altered, yet had I rather come near unto the Greek words of Paul. I know the verb is passive; but the asperity was to be mollified by a little digression.[2]

22. *Therefore was it imputed.* Here now appeareth more clearly, why and how faith brought righteousness to Abraham; namely, because he, leaning to the Word of God, did not refuse the promised grace. And this relation between faith and the Word is diligently to be retained, and committed to memory; for faith can bring us no more than he [it] hath received from the Word. Wherefore, he is not straightway righteous, who, being indued with a general and confused knowledge, granteth God is true, except he rest in the promise of grace.

Faith bringeth us no more than it hath received from the word.

23. *Now it was not written for him only, that it was imputed to him for righteousness;*

24. *But also for us, to whom it shall be imputed for righteousness, which believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*

25. *Who was delivered* [to death] *for our sins, and is risen again for our justification.*

23. *Now it was not written.* Because a proof taken from an example (as we have admonished above) is not always firm, lest that should come into question, Paul affirmeth plainly, that in the person of Abraham was shown an example of that common righteousness, which indifferently ap-

[1] "Examen," trial, test. [2] "Modica deflexione," a slight turn.

Digitized by Google

pertaineth unto all. In this place we are admonished of making our profit of examples in the Scriptures. The heathen have truly called an history *the mistress of life;* but, as it cometh from them, no man can safely profit in it. The Scripture only doth by right challenge that pre-eminence;[1] for, first, it prescribeth general rules, whereunto we may bring every history for trial, that it may serve to our profit. Secondly, it clearly discerneth what deeds are to be followed, and what are to be eschewed. And, as for doctrine, wherein it is chiefly conversant, it hath that peculiar to itself; as, namely, it showeth the providence of the Lord, his justice and goodness towards his, and his judgments towards the reprobate. That, therefore, which is said of Abraham, Paul denieth it to have been written for his cause only; for it is not a thing which pertaineth to the special calling of some one and certain person, but the manner of obtaining righteousness is described, which is one and perpetual amongst all; and this description is made in him that is the father of all the faithful, upon whom the eyes of all ought to intend.

How we ought to be occupied in the Scriptures.

Wherefore, if we will handle the sacred histories purely and godly, we must remember they are so to be handled, that we may reap thence the fruit of sound doctrine; and partly, they instruct us to frame our lives, partly to confirm our faith, partly to stir up the fear of the Lord; for the framing of our lives, the imitation of holy fathers shall help, if we learn of them sobriety, chastity, love, patience, modesty, contempt of the world, and other virtues; for the confirmation of our faith, the help of God maketh, which was always present to them; his protection and fatherly care which he always had over them, shall minister consolation in adversity; the judgments and punishments of God executed upon the wicked shall help us, if they put into us a fear, which may replenish our hearts with reverence and piety. And whereas he saith, *not for him only*, thereby he seemeth to insinuate, that it was partly written for his sake; whereby some understand, that to the praise of Abraham it is said what he obtained by faith; because the Lord will

[1] "Magisterium," office.

Digitized by Google

have his servants committed to eternal remembrance; as Solomon saith, *Their name is blessed.* But what if you take it more simply,[1] (as though it were some special privilege which might not be drawn into an example,) but that it also appertaineth to our instruction, who must be justified by the same manner? This shall be the fitter sense.

Prov. x. 7.

The example of Abraham, as all other examples, are written for our instruction.

24. *Which believe in him, &c.* I have already admonished what value these circumlocutions be of; namely, Paul hath inserted them, that, according to the circumstance of the places, they might diversly show the substance of faith; concerning the which, the resurrection of Christ is not the last part, which resurrection is unto us the ground[2] of the life to come. If he had simply said, that we believe in God, it had not been so easy to gather what this did make to the obtaining of righteousness; but while Christ appeareth, and in his resurrection doth offer a sure pledge of life, it is evident from what fountain the imputation of righteousness floweth.

25. *Which was delivered.* He doth prosecute and illustrate at large that doctrine which I touched immediately before; for it standeth us upon[3] not only to have our minds directed unto Christ, but also to have it distinctly opened unto us, how he hath purchased salvation for us. And albeit the Scripture, when it speaketh of our salvation, standeth only upon the death of Christ, yet here now the apostle goeth further; for, because his purpose was, to deliver the cause of salvation more clearly, he reckoneth two branches thereof. And first, he saith, our sins are done away by the death of Christ; secondly, that righteousness is purchased by his resurrection. The meaning is, when we hold the fruit of Christ's death and resurrection, nothing is missing unto us, as concerning perfect righteousness. And there is no doubt, but while he distinguisheth the death of Christ from his resurrection, he applieth his talk to our capacity; for otherwise it is true, the obedience of Christ which he showed in his

The fruit of Christ's death and resurrection is perfect righteousness.

[1] "Non propter ipsum duntaxat," not on account of him only, omitted.
[2] "Futuræ vitæ hypostasis." [3] "Nostra enim magnopere interest," for it greatly concerns us.

Digitized by Google

death, was the righteousness purchased for us;[1] as he also will show in the chapter following. But because, by rising from the dead, Christ declared how much he had prevailed by his death, this distinction serveth to teach us, that by that sacrifice, wherein sins are done away, our salvation was begun, and by his resurrection it was perfected; for the beginning of righteousness is, that we be reconciled to God; and the perfection[2] is, that, death being overcome, life might reign. Paul, therefore, signifieth how satisfaction for our sins was accomplished on the cross; for, that Christ might restore us again into the favour of the Father, it was meet our guiltiness were abolished by him; which could not be unless he would suffer that punishment for us, which we were not able to abide; for the chastisement of our peace was upon him, saith Esay, and he chooseth rather to say he was delivered than dead, [died;] because the satisfaction dependeth upon the eternal pleasure of God, who would be pacified this way.

By the death of Christ our salvation is begun, and by his resurrection it is perfected.

Isaiah liii. 5.

And is risen again for our justification. Because it was not sufficient for Christ to oppose himself to the ire and judgment of God, and to take upon him the curse due to our sins, unless he should also go forth the conqueror thereof, that, being received into the celestial glory, by his intercession he might reconcile God unto us. The virtue or power of justification is ascribed unto the resurrection whereby death was overcome; not that the sacrifice of the cross, whereby we are reconciled to God, did further our righteousness nothing: but because in the new life the perfection of this grace doth more clearly appear. And yet I cannot consent unto those who refer this second member unto newness of life; for the apostle, as yet, hath not begun to speak of that matter; secondly, it is sure that both members[3] appertain to one end. Wherefore, if justification signify renovation, then to have died for our sins were to be understood

How justification is ascribed unto the resurrection of Christ.

[1] "Christi obedientia quam in morti exhibuit, partam fuisse nobis justitiam," that, by the obedience of Christ, as exhibited in his death, righteousness was obtained for us. [2] "Complementum," the completion.

[3] "Eodem pertinere utrumque membrum," that both members (*of the sentence*) refer to the same thing.

Digitized by Google

in this sense, namely, that he died to purchase for us the grace of mortifying the flesh; which thing none granteth. Therefore, as he was said to die for our sins, because the price of sins being paid by his death, he hath delivered us from the calamity of death: So, now, he is said to be risen for our justification, because by his resurrection he hath perfectly restored life unto us. For, first, he was smitten by the hand of God, that in the person of a sinner he might sustain the misery of sin. Secondly, he was exalted into the kingdom of life, that he might indue his with righteousness and life. So, then, he speaketh still of justification by imputation; and that which followeth in the next chapter will prove the same.

CHAPTER V.

1. *Then being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ;*
2. *By whom we have access through faith into this grace wherein we stand, and glory under the hope of the glory of God.*

1. *Then being justified.* The apostle beginneth to illustrate that which he hath hitherto said of the righteousness of faith by the effects. Therefore, this whole chapter consisteth upon [in] amplifications, which are of no less force to explicate (or make plain) than they are to confirm. For he had said before, that faith was made void if righteousness were sought for by works; because a perpetual disquietness should trouble the miserable consciences, which find nothing firm and sure in themselves. Now, on the contrary, he teacheth, they are quieted and pacified after we have by faith obtained righteousness.

We have peace. A singular fruit of the righteousness of faith, for if any man go about to get the peace of conscience by works, (which is seen in profane and barbarous men,) he

Digitized by Google

goeth about it in vain; for either his heart is on sleep with the contempt or forgetfulness of God's judgment, or else full of trembling and fear, until he repose himself upon Christ; for he only is our peace. Therefore, the peace[1] of conscience signifieth that serenity and quietness which riseth hence, that a man feeleth God is reconciled to him. Neither the Pharisee, which swelleth with the false confidence of works, hath this peace; nor the secure sinner, who, being drunk with the pleasure of vices, is not disquieted. For although neither of these seem to have open war, as he that is smitten with the feeling of sin, yet because they come not truly to the judgment of God, they have not peace with him. For unsensibleness of conscience is (as a man would say) a certain departing from God. Therefore, peace towards God is opposed against the drunken security of the flesh; because this is the first thing of all, that every one might awake himself to give account of his life; and none can stand without fear before God but he which trusteth to the free reconciliation. For as long as God is a judge,[2] all men must needs be terrified and troubled, which is a strong argument, that our adversaries do nothing but babble under a shadow when they ascribe righteousness to works. For this conclusion of Paul dependeth upon that principle, namely, that the miserable consciences of men do always shake, unless they rest in the grace of Christ.

What the peace of conscience signifieth.

2. *By whom we have access.* Our reconciliation with God standeth upon Christ, for he only is the beloved Son; we all by nature are the sons of wrath. But this grace is communicated to us by the gospel, because it is the ministry of reconciliation, through whose benefit we are, after a sort, brought into the kingdom of God. Excellently, therefore hath Paul set before our eyes a sure pledge of the favour of God in Christ, whereby he might the better draw us from the confidence of works. And also teaching by the name of access, that the beginning of salvation is of Christ, he ex-

We prevent not the mercy of God by our merits.

[1] "Pax, ergo, conscientiæ serenitatem significat," peace, then, signifies that serenity of conscience. [2] "A judge," interpolated.

Digitized by Google

cludeth those preparations, whereby foolish men think they do prevent[1] the mercy of God, as though he said, Christ doeth not come unto us and help us for our merits. Straightway after he addeth, that it is through the tenor of the same grace that salvation abideth firm and sure unto us; whereby he signifieth, that perseverance standeth not in our own virtue or industry, but in Christ. Although, also, when he saith, *we stand*, he showeth how deep roots the gospel ought to take in the hearts of the godly; that they, being strengthened by the verity thereof, may stand firm against all the engines or devices of Satan and the flesh. And by this word *standing* he signifieth, that faith is not a wavering persuasion, or that continueth for one day, but steady, and deeply settled in the minds of men, that it might persevere the whole life.[2] He, therefore, that is driven by some sudden motion to believe, hath not faith so that he may be reckoned amongst the faithful; but he which constantly, and (that I may say so) with a firm foot, abideth in that place which is ordained to him of the Lord, that he may always cleave to Christ.

Perseverance is of Christ.

And we glory under the hope. Hence the hope of life to come both ariseth, and dareth to rejoice, namely, that we lean upon the grace of God as upon a foundation. For, the meaning of Paul is, notwithstanding the faithful are now strangers upon earth, yet by their faith they surmount the heavens, that they may quietly nourish in their bosom the inheritance to come; and so two pestilent doctrines of the sophisters are utterly overthrown. One, wherein they bid Christians, in comprehending[3] (or understanding) the grace of God towards them, to be content with a moral conjecture. Another, wherein they affirm all men to be uncertain of their final perseverance. But unless there be both presently a certain knowledge, and also in respect of that is to come a constant and firm[4] persuasion, who durst be so bold as to glory? The hope of the glory of God hath appeared to us by the gospel, which testifieth that we are partakers of

Whence joy and hope of life to come ariseth.

Two pestilent doctrines overthrown.

[1] "Antevertere," prevent, or anticipate. [2] "Tota vita," through life. [3] "In percipienda," in perceiving, or discerning. [4] "Minime dubia," undoubting.

Digitized by Google

the heavenly nature.[1] For when we shall see God face to face, we shall be like unto him. 2 Peter i. 4. 3 John iii. 2.

3. *Neither that only, but we rejoice, yea, even in afflictions, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience,*
4. *And patience trial, (or probation,) and trial, (or probation,) hope:*
5. *And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.*

3. *Neither that only.* Lest any should, by the way of scoffing, object, that yet, nevertheless, Christians with their glory or rejoicing are marvellously vexed and worn with miseries in this life, which condition is far from felicity, he preventeth that objection, and showeth how the godly are not only nothing hindered by calamities, that they should not be blessed, but also, that their glory is thereby furthered. To prove that, he reasoneth from the effect, and he useth a notable gradation, whereby at length he concludeth, that all the miseries whatsoever we suffer turn to our health and profit.

Afflictions do not only not hinder, but also they further the glory of the godly.

Whereas he saith, the saints rejoice in tribulations, it is not so to be understood as though they neither feared nor did shun adversities, or were not pinched with the bitterness of them when they happen, (for there can be no patience where there is no feeling of bitterness;) but because, in the midst of their sorrow and mourning, they are not without great consolation, for, seeing whatsoever they suffer they count it to be disposed by the hand of their most gracious Father to their profit, they are worthily said to glory. For, wheresoever there is an advancing of health, there wanteth no matter of glorying.

Here, then, we are taught what is the end of our tribulations, if we will show ourselves the sons of God. For they ought to inure us unto patience; and except they do so, the work of God through our corruption is made void and of none effect. For whence proveth he that

[1] "Divinæ naturæ," of a divine nature.

Digitized by Google

adversities hinder not the glory of the godly, but because in bearing them patiently they feel the help of God, which nourisheth and confirmeth their hope; therefore it is sure they profit but ill which learn not patience. Neither doth it let that there are extant in the Scriptures certain complaints of the godly full of desperation. For God sometimes for a while doth so urge and repress his, that scarcely they can breathe or think upon consolation; but straightway he bringeth again unto life those whom he had almost overwhelmed in the mist of death. So that is always fulfilled in them which Paul saith, "We are afflicted on every side, yet are we not in distress; in poverty, yet not overcome of poverty; we are persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but we perish not."

2 Cor. iv. 8.

How tribulation bringeth forth patience.

Tribulation patience. That cometh not of the nature of tribulation, whereby we see some men are provoked to murmur against God, yea, even to curse God; but when as the inward meekness which be infused by the Spirit of God, and consolation which is suggested by the same Spirit, hath succeeded in the place of stubbornness or frowardness, tribulations are instruments to beget patience; which tribulations can procure nothing in the obstinate but indignation and murmuring.

James i. 3.

4. *Patience trial.* James seemeth in the like gradation to follow a divers course; because, he saith, trial or probation bringeth forth patience. But the divers acceptation of the word being understood, will reconcile both places.

What trial signifieth with Paul.

For Paul taketh trial or probation for experience, which the faithful take of the sure protection of God, whilst they, trusting to his help, overcome all extremities; namely, whilst through patient sufferance they abide firm, for so they prove what value the power of God is, which he hath promised should be always present with his.

What trial signifieth with James.

James useth the same word for tribulation itself, according to the common use of the Scripture; because by them God proveth and examineth his servants; whereupon they are often called temptations. Therefore, concerning this present place, then have we profited accordingly in patience or suffering, when

Digitized by Google

we account the same to have consisted[1] unto us by the power of God, and so we gather hope that the grace of God shall never hereafter fail us, which hath alway succoured us in our necessity. Wherefore he addeth, that hope ariseth of trial or probation; for we were unthankful, if, when we have received the benefits of God, with the remembrance of them, we did not afterward confirm our hope.

5. *Hope maketh not ashamed.* That is to say, it hath a most sure issue of health. Whereby appeareth we are exercised of the Lord in adversities to this end, that our salvation might be promoted by these degrees. Then cannot miseries, which after a sort are helpers to blessedness, make us miserable. And so is that proved he said, namely, that the godly have matter of glorying in the midst of afflictions.

Because the love of God. I do not refer this only unto the word [that] went last before, but unto the whole[2] sentence; therefore, I say we are provoked or quickened by tribulations unto patience, and patience is an experiment unto us of the help of God, whereby we are the rather encouraged unto hope; for howsoever we be pressed, and seem such as should straightway be overthrown, yet we cease not to feel the favour of God towards us, which is a most fruitful consolation, and far more ample than if all things happened prosperously. For, as when God is angry, that is misery itself, which in show seemeth to be felicity; so, when he is pleased, sure it is that even calamities shall have a prosperous and happy success. Seeing all things must serve the will of the Creator, who, according to his Fatherly favour towards us, (as Paul will repeat again in the 8th chapter,) tempereth all the exercises of adversity to our salvation. This knowledge of the love of God towards us is put into our hearts by the Spirit of God. For the good things which God hath prepared for his worshippers are hidden both from the ears, and eyes, and minds of men; it is the Spirit only which can reveal them. And this participle, *shed abroad*, hath great emphasis; for it signifieth the love of God towards us to be so

God's favour is the well-spring of all goodness.

[1] "Eam nobis stetisse," that it (our patience) has been maintained.

[2] "Præcedentem," preceding, omitted.

Digitized by Google

plentifully revealed, that it might fill our hearts. And being so shed abroad through all parts, it doth not only mitigate sorrow in adversity, but, as a sweet sauce, it maketh tribulations amiable.

Moreover, he saith this spirit is given, namely, bestowed upon us by the free goodness of God, and not rendered unto us for our merits. As Augustine noteth very well, who, notwithstanding, is deceived in the exposition of the love of God; he saith, we suffer adversity constantly, and are confirmed in hope, because, we being regenerate by the Holy Spirit, do love God. This is verily a godly saying; but it cometh not near the mind of Paul. For love here is not taken actively, but passively. And sure it is, nothing else is taught of Paul than this to be the true fountain of all love, that the faithful be persuaded they are loved of God; neither are they lightly drenched[1] with this persuasion, but therewith they have their minds altogether imbrued.

Love here betokeneth that love wherewith God loveth us, and not that love wherewith we love him.

6. *For Christ, when we were yet weak, according to the time, died for the ungodly.*
7. *Doubtless, one will scarce die for a righteous man; but yet for a good man, it may be that one dare die.*
8. *But God confirmeth his love towards us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
9. *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

6. *For Christ.* In translating, I durst not take so much upon me as to turn it "according to the time wherein we were weak," which sense notwithstanding liked me rather. For here beginneth an argument from the greater to the less, which he prosecuteth afterwards at large. Albeit, he hath not framed the course of his speech so distinct; but the disordered composition of the speech[2] shall trouble the sense nothing. If Christ (quoth he) took pity upon the ungodly, if he reconciled his enemies to his Father, if he did this by virtue of his death; now, much more easily will he save

[1] "Tincti sunt," dyed, imbued. [2] "Inordinata orationis structura," the irregular structure of the sentence, or discourse.

Digitized by Google

them being justified; being restored to favour, he will keep them in the same; chiefly[1] seeing the efficacy of his life is now added unto his death. Some take the time of weakness for that time wherein Christ began first to be manifested to the world; and they suppose those men, who were under the erudition[2] of the law, to have been like unto children. But I refer it unto every one of us, and say it noteth the time that goeth before every man's reconciliation to God. For, as we are all born the sons of wrath, so are we holden under that curse until we be made partakers of Christ. And he calleth those infirm or weak which have nothing in them but it is corrupted; for he termeth the same straightway after ungodly. Neither is it any new thing that this word infirmity should be so taken. So he calleth the privy parts of the body feeble, and the presence of the body, which hath no majesty, weak. And this signification, a little after, doth often occur. Therefore, when we were feeble, that is, neither worthy nor meet that God should respect us, at that time Christ died for the wicked; because faith is the beginning of piety, from the which they were all estranged for whom he died, which also taketh place in the old fathers, who had obtained righteousness before his death; for they had that benefit from his death that was to come.

What time is called the time of weakness.

1 Cor. xii. 22. 2 Cor. x. 10.

7. *For the just.* Reason forced me to set down this particle, γαρ, *for*, rather affirmatively, or by the way of declaration, than causatively. This is the meaning of the sentence, It is a very rare thing amongst men, that any should die for a just man, although that may now and then happen; but let us grant that, yet can no man be found that will die for a wicked man. That did Christ. So it is an amplification taken from a comparison, because no such example of love is extant amongst men as Christ showed towards us.

No such example of love any where to be found as was in Christ, who died for the ungodly and his enemies.

8. *And God confirmeth.* Seeing this verb, συνιστησι, is of a doubtful signification, it is more fit, in this place, to be taken

[1] "Præsertim," especially.

[2] "Pædagogia," tuition.

Digitized by Google

for *to confirm;* for the purpose of the apostle is not to incite us unto thankfulness, but to establish the confidence and affiance of consciences.

He confirmeth. That is, he declareth his sure and most constant love towards us, in that for the ungodly's sake, he spared not Christ, his Son; for herein his love appeared, yet not being provoked by love, of his own free will he first loved us, as John saith. They are here called sinners (as in many other places) who are altogether corrupted, and addicted to sin; as John saith, "God heareth not sinners;" that is, such as are desperately and wholly given to wickedness; "a woman that was a sinner," that is, of an unhonest life. And that appeareth better by the antithesis which straightway followeth, being *justified by his blood;* for seeing he opposeth these two between themselves, and saith they are justified who are delivered from the guiltiness of sin, it is a consequent, they are sinners, who, for their evil works, are condemned. The sum is, If Christ, by his death, hath purchased righteousness unto sinners, much more shall he defend them, being now justified, from destruction. And in this last member he applieth the comparison of the less and greater unto this doctrine; for it were not enough that salvation was once purchased for us, except Christ did conserve the same safe and firm unto the end. And that is it the apostle goeth about now, namely, that it is not to be feared lest Christ should break off the course of his grace in the middle race; for since he hath reconciled us to the Father, such is our condition, that he will show forth his favour more effectually towards us, and daily increase the same.

John iii. 16.

John ix. 31.

Luke vii. 37.

Christ is no less able nor willing to defend than he was to redeem.

10. *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.*

This is an exposition of the former sentence with an amplification, taken from the comparison of life and death. We were enemies (quoth he) when Christ took upon him the mediation to reconcile the Father. Now we are friends through his reconciliation, if that could be brought to pass

Digitized by Google

by his death, his life shall be of greater power and more effectual. So then we have notable testimonies, which may confirm the confidence of salvation in our hearts. His meaning is, We were reconciled to God by the death of Christ, because it was the sacrifice of reconciliation, whereby God was reconciled to the world, as I have declared in the fourth chapter. But here the apostle seemeth to be contrary unto himself. For if the death of Christ were the pledge of the love of God towards us, it followeth, that even then we were acceptable to him; but now he saith we were enemies. I answer, because God hateth sin, we also are odious unto him, as we are sinners, but as in his secret counsel he electeth us into the body of Christ, he ceaseth to hate us; but the restoring into favour is unknown unto us, until we perceive it by faith; therefore, in respect of ourselves, we are always enemies, until the death of Christ come between to reconcile God. And this difference of a twofold respect is to be noted; for otherwise we know not the free mercy of God, than if we be persuaded that he spared not his only begotten Son, because he loved us at such time as there was enmity between him and us. Again, we do not sufficiently feel the benefit brought unto us by the death of Christ, except this be unto us the beginning of our reconciliation with God, that we being persuaded [of] the satisfaction being performed, he is now favourable to us, who before was justly angry with us. So when acceptation into grace is ascribed to the death of Christ, the meaning is, that then the guiltiness is taken away whereunto we are otherwise subject.

Objection.

Answer.

11. *And not this only; but also we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we are now reconciled.*

11. *And not this only.* Now he scaleth unto the highest step of rejoicing; for while we glory that God is ours, whatsoever good thing may either be imagined or wished doth follow and flow out of this fountain; for God is not only the chiefest of all good things, but he containeth the sum and every part in himself, and he is made ours by Christ. Hither then do we come by the benefit of faith, that no-

Digitized by Google

God, in whom all good things are included, is made ours by faith.

thing be wanting unto us touching felicity; and it is not without cause he so often repeateth reconciliation.

First, That we might learn to fix our eyes upon the death of Christ, as often as we speak of our salvation.

Secondly, That we may know that our confidence is nowhere else to be reposed than in the forgiveness of sins.

12. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and so death went over all men; inasmuch as all have sinned.*

13. (*For unto the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed while there is no law.*)

14. *But death reigned from Adam unto Moses, even over them that sinned not after the like manner of the transgression of Adam, which was the figure of him that was to come.*

12. *Wherefore, as.* Now he beginneth to exaggerate the same doctrine by a comparison taken from contraries. For if Christ came, therefore, that he might deliver us from that calamity into the which Adam fell, and did precipitate all his posterity with him, we can no way better see what we have in Christ, than when it is showed unto us what we lost in Adam; although all things are not alike on both parts. Therefore, Paul addeth a correction, which shall be seen in his place; and we also, if there be any diversity, shall note it. The inconsequent[1] doth somewhat darken the speech, because the second member in the comparison is not expressed, which might answer to the former. But we will do our diligence to make both plain when we come unto the place.

It is a vice in writing when that is not put down which might answer the former.

Sin entered into the world, &c. Mark here what order he useth. For he saith sin was first, and of [from] that death followed. For there are some that go about to prove us to be so cast away by the sin of Adam, as though we perished through no fault of our own, but, therefore, only as though he sinned for us. Yet Paul affirmeth plainly, that sin hath entered[2] into all which suffer the punishment of sin. And

[1] "Anacoluthos, (ἀνακολουθος.")

[2] "In omnes propagatum esse," was propagated into all.

Digitized by Google

that he urgeth more strictly, when, a little after, he setteth down the reason why all the posterity of Adam is subject to the power of death, namely, (quoth he,) because we have all sinned. Furthermore, this same, *to sin*, is to be corrupt and faulty. For that natural pravity which we bring out of our mother's womb, although it do not so soon show forth his fruits, yet, nevertheless, it is sin before the Lord, and deserveth his vengeance: And this is that sin they call original. For as Adam, by his first creation, as well received for himself as for his posterity the gifts of God's grace; so he, falling from the Lord, corrupted, vitiated, defiled, and destroyed our nature in himself. For he being put away from the similitude of God, could beget no seed but like unto himself. We have all, therefore, sinned, because we are all indued with natural corruption, and so are become sinful and froward. For that imagination was frivolous, whereby in old time the Pelagians went about to shift off the words of Paul, saying, that sin hath descended from Adam to all mankind by imitation; for so Christ should be only an example of righteousness, and not the cause. Here, also, it may easily be gathered, that the question is not of actual sin; for if every one should work guiltiness to himself, to what end should Paul compare Adam with Christ? It followeth, therefore, that ingrafted and natural corruption[1] is noted.

Sin taken for corruption of nature.

How all are said to have sinned.

13. *Until the law.* This parenthesis containeth a preoccupation.[2] For, because it seemeth not there is any transgression without the law, it might be doubted whether there were any sin before the law. That there was, after the law, there is no doubt; only the question was, of the time [that] went before the law.[3] Therefore he answereth, that albeit God had not as yet denounced sentence by the written law, yet was mankind under the curse; yea, and that from his mother's womb; and, therefore, much less were they absolved from the condemnation of sin who lived wickedly before the publishing of the law. For there was always a

If all men be sinners as they come out of their mother's womb, much more are they which live wickedly.

[1] "Pravitatem nobis ingenitum et hereditariam," our innate and hereditary depravity. [2] "Anticipationem," anticipation. [3] "Tantum hærebat quæstio in tempore legem præcedente," the only question was, as to the time preceding the law.

Digitized by Google

God to whom worship was due, and there was always some rule of righteousness. This interpretation is so plain and clear, that it doth sufficiently of itself refell all contrary interpretations.

But sin is not imputed. Without the reprehension of the law, we are in a manner asleep in our sins. And although we are not ignorant that we do evil, yet as much as in us is, we overwhelm[1] the knowledge of evil offering itself; at the least, we put it out through sudden forgetfulness, but while the law reproveth and checketh us, as it were pulling us by the ear, it doth awaken us, so that now and then we return to think upon the judgment of God. Therefore, the apostle noteth how perverse men are when they are not stirred up by the law, namely, the difference of good and evil, for the most part, being driven away, securely and sweetly to pamper themselves, as though there were no judgment of God. Otherwise, that iniquities have been imputed unto men of God, the punishment of Cain, the flood, wherein all the world was destroyed, the destruction of Sodom, the plagues [which] fell[2] upon Pharaoh and Abimelech for Abraham; lastly, the evils that came upon Egypt, do prove. That men also amongst themselves have charged one another with sin, it is manifest by so many complaints and expostulations, wherein one accuseth another of iniquity; again, by their apologies, wherein they studiously go about to clear their deeds. Finally, that every man was guilty of evil and good in his own conscience,[3] there be many examples which prove. But, for the most part, they did so wink at their evil facts, that they would impute nothing unto themselves for sin, but that they were constrained. Therefore, when he denieth sin to be imputed without the law, he speaketh by the way of comparison; namely, because when they are not pricked by the sting of the law, they bury themselves in slothfulness. Furthermore, Paul hath inserted this sentence very wisely, that the Jews might thereby the better learn, how great blame they should sustain, whom the law did openly condemn. For, if

How sin is said not to be imputed without the law.

[1] "Obruimus," we bury, or suppress. [2] "Irrogatæ," were inflicted.
[3] "Sibi et mali et boni fuisse conscium," was conscious to himself of, or was able to discern between, good and evil.

Digitized by Google

they were not free from punishment, whom God never summoned guilty before his tribunal seat, what shall come unto the Jews, to whom the law, like a crier, showeth their guiltiness, yea, denounceth judgment? Another reason also may be brought, why he may plainly say, that sin reigned before the law, yet was not imputed; namely, that we might know the cause of death not to come of the law, but to be[1] showed by the law. He saith, therefore, that all men were forthwith, from the fall of Adam, miserably cast away, albeit that destruction was long after revealed by the law. If you translate the particle adversative δε, *although, albeit*, the text shall run better; for the meaning shall be, albeit men flatter themselves, yet they cannot escape the judgment of God, yea, while the law doth not reprove them.

Another reason why sin is said to have reigned, but not to have been imputed before the law.

Death reigned from Adam. He openeth more clearly, how it profited men nothing, that from Adam until the publishing of the law they lived licentiously and securely, the choice or difference of good and evil being rejected, and so without the admonition of the law, the remembrance of sin was buried; because, nevertheless, sin was of force unto condemnation. Wherefore, then, also death reigned, because the cecity[2] and hardness of men could not oppress the judgment of God.

14. *Yea, even over them.* Although this place be commonly understood of infants, who, not being guilty of any actual sin, die through original corruption; yet had I rather expound it generally of all those [who] sinned without law. This sentence must be annexed[3] unto the words [which] went before, where it was said, that they who wanted the law did not impute sin unto themselves. They, therefore, sinned not after the similitude of the transgression of Adam; because they had not, as he had, the will of God revealed by a certain oracle. For God had forbidden Adam to touch the fruit of knowledge of good and evil; but to these he gave no commandment besides the witness of their conscience. The meaning, then, of the apostle is secretly to insinuate, that

How they who sinned without law are said not to have sinned after the similitude of Adam.

[1] "Tantum," only, omitted. [2] "Cæcitas," blindness. [3] "Contexenda," connected with.

Digitized by Google

through this diversity between Adam and his posterity, it cometh not to pass that they are exempted from condemnation. In the meanwhile, under the universal catalogue, infants also are comprehended.

Who is the figure of him that was to come. This sentence is put instead of the other member. For we see one only part of the comparison expressed, the other being by that vice in writing called ἀναζευγμένον, that is, *a non sequel*, or *consequent*, omitted. A man may, therefore, take it as though it were written thus, As by one man sin entered into the whole world, and by sin death; so by one man cometh righteousness, and by righteousness life. And whereas he saith Adam was a figure of Christ, it is no marvel; for even in things most contrary there appeareth always some similitude. Because, therefore, as through the sin of Adam we are all lost, so by the righteousness of Christ we are restored, very aptly hath he called Adam a type of Christ. And note, that Adam is not called a figure of sin, nor Christ of righteousness, as though they went only before us by their example, but the one is compared with the other, lest thou fall foully[1] with Origen, and that into a pernicious error. For he disputeth philosophically and profanely of the corruptions of mankind, and doth not only extenuate[2] the grace of Christ, but, in a manner, doth wholly destroy it. Whereby Erasmus is by so much the less excusable, who taketh so great pains to excuse so gross a dotage.

How Adam is a figure of Christ.

15. *But not as the offence, so also the gift; for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and gift of God in grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*

15. *But not as the offence.* Now follow corrections of the late comparison; wherein, notwithstanding the apostle doth not curiously discuss whatsoever dissimilitude there is between Christ and Adam, but he doth occur[3] those errors, whereunto men might otherwise easily fall. And that which is wanting to the exposition we will add.

[1] "Cum Origene perperam hallucineris," fall into the gross delusion of Origen. [2] "Enervat," enfeeble. [3] "Occurrit," obviates.

Digitized by Google

For, albeit he oftentimes maketh mention of the difference, yet maketh he mention thereof nowhere but there is a defect, or, at the least, some eclipse,[1] which verily are faults in speech, yet such as are not prejudicial to the majesty of the celestial wisdom [which] is delivered unto us by the apostle; but rather it is brought to pass by the singular providence of God, that under a base style these high mysteries should be delivered unto us, that our faith might not depend upon the power of human eloquence, but upon the only efficacy of the Spirit. And he doth not here as yet precisely unfold that manner of correction; but simply he teacheth there is a greater measure of grace purchased by Christ, than of condemnation contracted by the first man. Whereas some think the apostle disputeth, or frameth an argument here, I know not whether all will approve of it or no. Indeed, it might (and that not unaptly) be inferred, if the fall of Adam were of such force to the destruction of many, much more effectual is the grace of God to the benefit of many; seeing it is granted, that Christ is of far greater power to save than Adam to destroy. But because they cannot be refuted, if any will take it without an illation or conclusion; for me they shall choose whether sentence they will. Albeit that which next followeth cannot be counted an illation, (or conclusion,) and yet it is of the same nature. Whereby it is like that Paul doth simply correct, or, by exception, moderate [that] what he said of the similitude of Christ and Adam. And note yet here, more are not compared with many, (for the question is not of the multitude of men,) but he reasoneth thus, Seeing the sin of Adam did destroy many, the righteousness of Christ hath no less power to save many. Whereas he saith, we perished by the offence of one, understand it thus, because corruption is descended from him to us. For we do not so perish through his fault, as though we were without fault ourselves; but because his sin is the cause of our sin, Paul ascribeth our destruction to him. I call that our sin which is grafted in us, and wherewith we are born.

How we are said to perish through the fall of Adam.

[1] "Ellipsis."

Digitized by Google

What is meant by grace, and what by the gift of grace.

The grace of God, and the gift of God in grace. Grace properly is opposed against offence, and the gift which proceedeth from grace against death. Therefore, grace signifieth the mere goodness of God, or his free love, whereof he gave a testimony in Christ, that he might help our misery. And the gift is the fruit of mercy, which hath come unto us, namely, reconciliation, whereby we have obtained life and health, righteousness, newness of life, and whatsoever is like. Whereby we see how sottishly the schoolmen define grace, whilst they will have it to be nothing else than a quality infused into the hearts of men. For grace properly is in God, the effect of grace is in us. And, he saith, the same grace was of one man Christ, because the Father hath made him the fountain, of whose fulness all men must draw. And so he teacheth, there cannot one drop be found out of Christ; neither is there any other remedy of our poverty,[1] than that he pour into us of his abundance.

16. *And not as by one which had sinned, so the gift. For judgment came of one offence to condemnation, but the gift is of many offences to justification.*

16. This is a special reason of the correction, that by one offence the guiltiness was of force to the condemnation of us all; but grace, or rather the free gift, is effectual to justification from many offences. For it is a declaration[2] of the last sentence; because as yet he had not expressed how, or in what part, Christ excelled Adam. This difference being put down, it is apparent that they have thought wickedly, who have taught that we recover nothing else in Christ, but that we should be delivered from original sin, or corruption drawn from Adam. Add, that those same many offences, from the which he testifieth we are purged through the benefit of Christ, are not only to be understood of those which every one hath committed before baptism, but also of those by the which the godly do daily draw guiltiness[3] upon them, and to the condemnation whereof they should worthily

What be those many offences [which] are done away by the benefit of Christ.

[1] "Et defectus," and deficiency. [2] "Declaratio," clearing up, explanation. [3] "Novum reatum contrahant," contract new guilt.

Digitized by Google

be subject, except this grace did help forthwith. When to judgment he opposeth gift, the first signifieth rigour, as the other signifieth free pardon.

Judgment for exact justice. Gift signifieth free pardon.

For of severity, or rigour, cometh condemnation; of pardon cometh absolution. Or, (which is all one,) if God deal with us according to justice, we are all undone; but he justifieth us freely in Christ.

17. *For if, through the offence of one, death hath reigned by one; much more shall they which have received the abundance of grace, and gift of righteousness, reign in life by Jesus Christ.*

17. *For if, through the offence of one.* Again he addeth a general correction, wherein he persisteth the rather, because his purpose is not to prosecute every part, but to set down the special sum of the matter. Before he said, the power of grace had overmatched the power of sin. Hereby he comforteth and confirmeth the faithful, and withal he provoketh and exhorteth them to reverence the bountifulness of God; for this is the meaning of so studious a repetition, that the grace of God might be commended according to the dignity thereof, that men might be drawn from trust in themselves unto Christ; that we, having obtained his grace, might enjoy full assurance, whence at length springeth thankfulness. The sum is, because Christ excelleth Adam, the righteousness of Christ overcometh the sin of Adam; the curse of Adam is overthrown by the grace of Christ; the death [that] came of Adam is swallowed up of the life [that] is come of Christ. But yet, even the members of this comparison do not answer one another; for he should have said, the benefit of life reigneth and flourisheth more by the abundance of grace; instead thereof he saith the faithful shall reign, which is as much in value; because the kingdom of the faithful is in life, and also the kingdom of life is in the faithful.

Furthermore, it is necessary to note here two differences between Christ and Adam; which the apostle hath not therefore omitted, as though he thought them meet to be neglected, but because, concerning the present argument, it was no matter to reckon them.

A twofold difference between Christ and Adam.

Digitized by Google

The first is, that through the sin of Adam we are not condemned by sole imputation, as though the punishment of another's fault were exacted upon us; but therefore sustain we the punishment of his sin, because we are also guilty of his crime, namely, in as much as our nature, being corrupted in him, is holden guilty of iniquity before God. But by the righteousness of Christ we are restored in another sort unto salvation; for it is not therefore imputed unto us, as though it were within us, but because we possess Christ himself, with all his graces, given unto us by the bountifulness of the Father. Therefore, the gift of righteousness signifieth not a quality wherewith God indueth us, (as some have very wickedly expounded,) but the free imputation of righteousness; for the apostle declareth what he meant by the word *grace*. The second difference is, that the benefit of Christ hath not redounded unto all men, as Adam hath plunged all his progeny in condemnation. And the reason is at hand; for, seeing this malediction or curse which we draw from Adam is derived unto us by nature, it is no marvel though it comprehend the whole mass. But verily, that we may come into participation of the grace of Christ, we must be grafted into him by faith. Therefore, to obtain the miserable inheritance of sin, it is enough to be a man; for it abideth in flesh and blood. But to obtain the righteousness of Christ, thou must needs be a faithful man; because that by faith his fellowship is obtained. It is communicated to infants by a special manner; for they have the privilege of adoption in the covenant, whereby they pass into the society of Christ. I speak of the children of the godly, unto whom the promise of grace is directed; for others are not exempted from the common estate.

18. *Therefore, as by the offence of one condemnation* came *upon all men; so, by the justification of one, justification of life* is come *upon all men.*

18. This is an imperfect speech, which may be made perfect, if the words *condemnation* and *justification* be read in the nominative case, as sure they must be resolved, if you will have the sense perfect. And it is the general conclusion of

Digitized by Google

that comparison which went before; for now, having omitted the mention of the interposed correction, he knitteth up that similitude, as by the offence of one we are made sinners, so the righteousness of Christ is effectual to justify us, although he putteth not δικαιωσυνη, (that is, the righteousness of Christ,) but δικαιωμα, (that is, the justification of Christ;) that he might admonish how Christ is not just privately to himself; but that righteousness wherewithal he was indued doth extend further, namely, that he might enrich the faithful with the gift bestowed upon him. He maketh it a grace common to all, because it is offered to all. Not that all men are partakers of it indeed; for albeit Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world, and he indifferently, through the goodness of God offered unto all, yet all do not receive him. And those two words,[1] which he used of late, may be repeated in this sense, as by the *judgment* of God it came to pass, that the sin of one should redound to the condemnation of many, so shall grace be effectual to the justification of many. *Justification of life* (in my judgment) is taken for absolution,[2] which restoreth life unto us, as though he called it a *quickening justification;* for thence cometh the hope of salvation, if God be merciful unto us; and of necessity we must be just, that we may be acceptable to him; therefore, life cometh of justification.

How the righteousness of Christ is common to all.

19. *For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made just.*

This is no superfluous speech, but a necessary declaration of the former sentence; for it showeth that we are so guilty by the offence of one man, that we are not innocent. He said before we were damned; but lest any man should attribute unto himself innocence, he would also add, that every one is condemned, because he is a sinner.

Moreover, when he saith we are justified by the obedience of Christ, hereby we gather Christ, in that he satisfied the Father, to have purchased righteousness for us.

[1] "Judicium ac gratia," *judgment* and *grace*, omitted. [2] "Absolutione," absolute forgiveness.

Digitized by Google

Righteousness is a quality in Christ, and is made ours by imputation.

Whereupon it followeth, the quality of righteousness is in Christ, but that is imputed unto us which is proper to him. And also[1] he openeth what kind of righteousness the righteousness of Christ is, when he calleth it obedience; where let us note, I pray you, what we must bring into the sight of God, if we will be justified by works; namely, obedience of the law, not such as is perfect in some one part or other, but which is every way perfect; for, if the just man fall, all his former righteousness is not remembered. Here also we are to learn, that they are perversely led in pleasing God,[2] who of themselves devise what they may thrust upon him. For then we worship him best, when we follow that which he hath commanded us, and give obedience to his word. Let them go now who boldly claim unto themselves the righteousness of works, which is not otherwise than when the law is fully and perfectly kept.[3] Likewise, we gather that they are deceived who brag before God those works they have invented themselves, which he esteemeth no better than dung; for obedience is better than sacrifices.

20. *Moreover, the law entered, that the offence should abound; for where sin abounded, grace superabounded.*

21. *That as sin reigned by death, so might grace also reign by righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

20. *Moreover, the law entered.* This question dependeth of [on] what he said before; namely, that sin was before the law were published; for that being once heard, this followed straightway, to what end then was the law needful? Wherefore of necessity this difficulty was to be unfolden; but because then it was not meet to make any longer digression, he deferred it unto this place. And now also, by the way, he doth dispatch it, saying, the law entered, that sin might abound. He doth not here show the whole office and use of the law; but toucheth one only part, which served for the

The law was partly given that men might the better see their own destruction.

[1] "Simul," at the same time. [2] "Perversa consilia placendi Deo captari ab iis," that perverse schemes of pleasing God are laid hold of by those. [3] "Atqui hanc nullibi reperiri certum est," and it is certain that this is no where found, omitted.

Digitized by Google

present purpose; for he teacheth, that to the end the grace of God might have place, it was expedient men should better see their own destruction. They were verily before the law castaways, yet, because they did seem unto themselves to swim in their own destruction,[1] they are thrust down into the deep, that their deliverance might be the more excellent, while beyond all man's judgment they escape thence; neither was it absurd that the law should be partly given for this cause, that men already once condemned it might twice condemn; for there is nothing more just than that all men by all means might be brought, yea, being convicted, might be drawn, to feel their evils.

That sin might abound. It is known how some, after Augustine, are wont to expound this place; namely, that concupiscence is so much the more provoked, while it is restrained by the bars of the law, because it is natural unto man to strive after that [which] is forbidden; but I understand no other augmentation to be noted here than of knowledge and obstinacy; for, by the law, sin is laid open before the eyes of man, that he might be compelled to see condemnation prepared for him. So sin occupieth the conscience, which otherwise being cast behind them, men made no account of.

Moreover, he which before did simply pass the bounds of justice, now a law being given, is a despiser of the authority of God, since the time that the will of God was known unto him, which he, according to his lust, hath shamefully contemned. Whereupon it followeth that sin is increased by the law, because then the authority and majesty of the law-maker is despised.

How sin is increased by the law.

Grace also hath superabounded. After that sin had holden men, being overwhelmed therewith, then grace did help; for this he teacheth, that the greatness of grace was by so much the more apparent, as that when sin abounded it did pour out itself so abundantly, that it did not only overmatch that deluge of sin, but also swallow it up. And here we are to learn that condemnation is not therefore set before us in the law, that we should abide in it; but that our own misery

Why condemnation is set before us in the law.

[1] Because in their own destruction they seemed unto themselves to swim.

Digitized by Google

being sufficiently acknowledged, we might be lifted up unto Christ, who is sent to be a physician to the sick, a deliverer of the captive, a comforter of the afflicted, a saviour of the oppressed.

Isaiah lxi. 1.

20. *That, as sin reigned in death.* As sin is called the sting of death, because death hath no power against man but for the cause of sin, so sin executeth his power by death. Therefore is it said to exercise his authority by death. In the latter part of this verse there is the figure *synchesis*, (that is, when the order is every way confused,) and yet it is not superfluous. The antithesis had been simple, if he had said thus, that *righteousness* might reign by Christ; but Paul, not being content to have opposed contraries to contraries, addeth *grace*, to the end he might print more deeply in memory that it is not of our merit, but wholly of the bountifulness of God. Before, he said that death reigned; now he ascribeth the kingdom unto sin, but whose end and effect is death. And he saith, in the preter tense, it *reigned*; not that it hath now ceased to reign in those that are born only of flesh and blood; but he distinguisheth so between Christ and Adam, that he assigneth to either of them his time. As soon, therefore, as the grace of Christ beginneth to flourish in every one, the kingdom of sin and death ceaseth.

Death hath no authority at all over man but by sin, therefore, sin executeth his authority by death.

CHAPTER VI.

1. *What shall we say then? Shall we abide in sin, that grace may abound?*
2. *God forbid: for how shall we, which are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

1. *What shall we say then?* In this whole chapter the apostle declareth that they do wickedly rend Christ asunder who imagine free righteousness to be given of him unto us,

Digitized by Google

without newness of life. Although he goeth further, objecting, that then it seemeth there is place given unto grace, if men be plunged in sin. For we know there is nothing more ready than that flesh should every way flatter itself, and that Satan should devise reproaches, wherewith he might slander the doctrine of grace, which thing to do is no hard matter for him. For, seeing that is most strange unto man's reason, whatsoever is preached of Christ, it ought to be no marvel if the flesh, after it hath heard the justification of faith, do so often (as it were) dash upon divers rocks. Howbeit we must go on, for Christ is not therefore to be suppressed, because he is unto many a stone of offence and rock of stumbling; for, look, by what way he shall be unto the ruin of the wicked, the same way, again, he shall be to the rising of the godly. And yet, notwithstanding, we are always to occur[1] unreasonable questions, lest the doctrine of Christ should seem to draw with it any absurdity.

The doctrine of grace must not, therefore, be suppressed, because many take occasion of licentiousness at it.

Moreover, the apostle now pursueth that objection which commonly is objected against the doctrine of the grace of God; namely, "If it be true that the grace of God doth help us so much the more bountifully and largely, as we have been overwhelmed with a greater weight of sin, there is nothing more expedient for us, than that we, being drowned in the depth of sin, should oftentimes, by new offences, provoke the wrath of God; for so at length we shall feel greater plenty of grace, than the which nothing is more to be wished for." As for the manner of refutation, we shall see it afterward.

Objection.

2. *God forbid.* Some think that the apostle doth only, by the way of a sharp correction, reprehend so unreasonable a madness; but, by other places, it doth appear how familiar an answer this is with him, yea, in much disputation, (or many arguments,) as here also he will shortly with great diligence refute the objected obloquy; yet, first, by this particle of one detesting he doth reject it, that he might admonish the readers there is nothing more unlike than that the grace of Christ, the repairer of our righteousness, should nourish our vices.

[1] "Occurrendum," obviate.

Digitized by Google

The grace of Christ abolisheth sin, and therefore doth not nourish it.

Which are dead to sin. This is an argument taken from the contrary; for it is certain, that he which sinneth liveth to sin; but we are dead to sin by the grace of Christ; therefore is it false that that should nourish sin which doth abolish it. For thus the case standeth: the faithful are never reconciled unto God without the gift of sanctification, yea, to this end are we justified, that afterward we might worship God in holiness of life. For Christ doth not otherwise wash us with his blood, and by his satisfaction reconcile God unto us, than while he maketh us partakers of his Spirit, which reneweth us into an holy life. It were, therefore, too preposterous an inversion of the work of God, if, by occasion of that grace which is offered us in Christ, sin should gather any strength. For the medicine is not the nourisher of that [which] it extinguisheth. Finally, we must remember that [what] I touched of late, namely, that Paul doth not here say what God doth find us to be, while he calleth us into the society of his Son, but what we should be after he hath had mercy upon us, and hath adopted us freely. For, by a verb of the future tense, he showeth what manner of change should follow righteousness.

3. *Know ye not, that all we which have been baptized into Jesus Christ have been baptized into his death?*

4. *We are buried then with him by baptism into his death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life.*

3. *Know ye not.* He proveth the former sentence; namely, that Christ killeth sin in his, by the effect of baptism, whereby we are incorporated into his faith. For it is out of question that we put on Christ in baptism; and with this condition are we baptized, that we should be one with him. Now Paul taketh another principle, namely, that we do then indeed grow up into the body of Christ, when his death bringeth forth his fruit in us. Yea, he teacheth that this participation of death is principally to be respected in baptism. For not only purgation, but also mortification, and the dying of the old man, is proposed there; whereby it is manifest, [that] after we are received into the grace of Christ, the efficacy of

Then do we truly grow up into the body of Christ, when his death bringeth forth fruit in us.

Digitized by Google

his death appeareth straightway. Finally, what this society with the death of Christ availeth, it followeth straightway.

4. *Being buried then with him.* Now he beginneth to show, although he do not plainly declare whereunto it appertaineth, that we are baptized into the death of Christ; namely, that we, being dead unto ourselves, might become new men. For from the participation of his death he passeth conveniently unto the participation of life; because these two hang together by an inseparable connection; namely, the old man to be abolished by the death of Christ, that his resurrection might restore righteousness, and make us new creatures. And surely, seeing Christ is given us unto life, to what end should we die with him, except we might rise again unto a better life? And, therefore, to no other end hath he slain that [which] is mortal in us, but that he might truly quicken us. Furthermore, let us note that the apostle doth not simply here exhort us to imitate Christ, as if he said, the death of Christ is instead of an example, which all Christians ought to follow; for he surely goeth higher, delivering doctrine, out of the which afterward he draweth exhortation, as it is easy. And this is the doctrine, that the death of Christ is effectual to extinguish and banish the pravity of the flesh; and his resurrection to raise up the newness of a better nature; and that by baptism we are received into the participation of this grace. This foundation being laid, a man may very aptly exhort Christians, that they strive to answer their calling. Moreover, it forceth not that this virtue doth not appear in all those [that] are baptized. For Paul, after his manner, because he speaketh unto the faithful, conjoineth the substance and effect with the external sign. For we know that by their faith is established and ratified whatsoever the Lord offereth by the visible pledge. To be brief, he teacheth what is the verity of baptism rightly received. So to the Galatians he testifieth, that all they whosoever are baptized in Christ have put on Christ. For so a man must say so long as the institution of the Lord and the faith of the godly agree together; for we never have bare and idle signs but when our unthankfulness and wickedness hindereth the working of God's bountifulness.

Mortification and newness of life go together.

Gal. iii. 27.

When the sacraments are effectual pledges, and when they be but bare signs.

Digitized by Google

By the glory of the Father, that is, through his notable power, whereby he hath declared himself truly glorious, and hath (as it were) manifested the greatness of his glory. So oftentimes in Scripture is the power of God, which hath showed itself in the resurrection of Christ, set forth by some excellent title; and not without cause, for it is greatly material, that by such express mention of the incomparable power of God, not only the faith of the last resurrection, which far exceedeth the capacity of flesh, but also other fruits, which we receive by the resurrection of Christ, should be highly extolled with us.

5. *For if we be grafted into the similitude of his death, even so also shall we be partakers of his resurrection.*
6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified together with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should not serve sin any more.*

5. *For if we be grafted.* By plainer words he proveth the argument which he hath put down before; for the similitude he bringeth in taketh away all ambiguity, because grafting doth not only note the conformity of example, but a secret conjunction, whereby we grow up together with him; so that he, quickening us with his Spirit, poureth his virtue into us. Therefore, as a graft hath the condition of life and death common together with the tree in the which it is grafted, so it is reason we should no less be partakers of the life than of the death of Christ. For if we be grafted into the similitude of the death of Christ, and that is not without his resurrection, then no more shall our death be without a resurrection. But the words may have a twofold exposition, either that we are grafted in Christ into the similitude of his death, or simply we are grafted into his similitude. The first acception[1] would require the Greek dative ὁμοιώματι, that is, to the similitude, to be referred to the showing of the manner. And I deny not but that hath a fuller sense; yet, because the other agreeth better to the simplicity of the word,[2] I have thought good to prefer it, albeit it is but a

[1] "Prior lectio," the former meaning. [2] "Simplicitate dictionis," to simplicity of expression.

Digitized by Google

small matter, seeing both come to one sense. Chrysostom thinketh Paul said, *the similitude of death* for *death;* as, in another place, "being made in the similitude of men." But methinks I see some greater emphasis in this word. For besides that it availeth to infer the resurrection, it seemeth to tend unto this, not that we should die like Christ by a natural death, but that we have this congruency with his death, that as he died in the flesh which he received of us, so we should die in ourselves that we may live in him. Then is it not the same death, but the like; for the resemblance, or proportion, between the death of this present life and spiritual renovation is to be noted.

Phil. ii. 7.

How we are grafted into the similitude of the death of Christ.

Grafted. This word is very significant, for it declareth plainly that the apostle doth not exhort only, but rather delivereth the doctrine of the benefit of Christ. For he requireth not anything of us which is to be done by our study or industry; but he preacheth that grafting which is done by the hand of God. Neither is it convenient a man should go about to apply the metaphor or comparison to every part. For between the grafting of trees and this our spiritual grafting there will straightway appear a diversity; for in that, the graft doth draw his nourishment from the root, but yet retaineth his natural property of bearing fruit; but in this insertion or grafting of ours, we do not only draw the juice and strength of life from Christ, but also we pass from our nature into his. Howbeit, the mind of the apostle is to note nothing else than that efficacy of the death of Christ, which showeth itself in the mortification of our flesh, and that of his resurrection, to renew in us a better nature of the Spirit.

Wherein the similitude of grafting holdeth not.

6. *That our old man.* It is called the *old man*, as the Old Testament is so called, in respect of the New; for it beginneth to be old, when our regeneration being begun, it is by little and little destroyed. And he meaneth the whole nature which we bring out of our mother's womb, which is so incapable of the kingdom of God, that it must needs perish, so far forth as we may be restored into true life. He saith, this old man is fastened to the cross of Christ,

How it is called the old man.

Digitized by Google

because through his virtue it is slain. And he hath precisely alluded unto the cross, that he might expressly show how we have not mortification elsewhere than by the participation of his death; for I do not agree unto them, who understand that he said, rather crucified than dead, because it liveth yet and flourisheth on some part. That is verily a true saying, yet it agreeth but little with the present place.

How the old man is crucified.

The body of sin, which he addeth a little after, signifieth not the flesh and bones, but the mass (of sin and corruption.) For man being left to the corruption of his own nature, is a mass contracted[1] of sin. He noteth the end of this abolishing when he saith,

What is meant by the body of sin.

That we should not serve sin any more. Whereby it followeth, that so long as we are the sons of Adam, and nothing else but men, we are so subject unto sin, that we can do nothing else but sin; but being grafted into Christ, we are delivered from this miserable necessity; not that by and by[2] we cease altogether to sin, but that at length we become victors in the fight.

7. *For he that is dead is justified from sin.*
8. *For if so that we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*
9. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more power over him.*
10. *For in that he died, he died to sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*
11. *So ye also esteem yourselves dead verily unto sin; but living unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

7. *For he that is dead.* This is an argument taken from the property or effect of death; for if death put down all the actions of life, we which are dead must needs cease from the actions of that life, which actions it exercised while the same life continued. For *justified*, understand freed and delivered from servitude or bondage. For as he is loosed from the bond of accusation, who is freed from the sentence of the judge; so death, loosing us from this life, doth free us from

[1] "Conflata," composed. [2] "Statim," instantly, forthwith.

Digitized by Google

all the actions thereof. Furthermore, albeit there is no where amongst men such an example extant, yet there is no cause why thou shouldest think this that is said here, either to be a vain imagination, or shouldest despair because thou findest not thyself in the number of those who have utterly crucified the flesh. For this work of God is not perfected the same day it is begun in us, but it increaseth by little and little, and by daily increments as by degrees is brought to perfection. To be brief, then, take it thus, If thou art a Christian, there must appear in thee the sign of thy communication with the death of Christ, whose fruit is, that the flesh be crucified, with all his concupiscences; howbeit, thou mayest not, therefore, count this communication as none, because as yet thou dost feel some relics of the flesh to live in thee, but thou art continually to study for the augmentation thereof, until thou art come unto the mark. For it is well if our flesh be continually mortified; and we have profited well, when the flesh, being subdued, hath yielded to the Holy Spirit. There is another communication of the death of Christ, whereof, as the apostle speaketh often elsewhere, so to the Corinthians, namely, the bearing of the cross, after which followeth the participation of eternal life.

The fruit of our communication with the death of Christ is, that the flesh, with his concupiscences, be mortified.

2 Cor. iv.

8. *For if we be dead.* This he repeateth to no other end, than that he might add a declaration, which followeth afterward, that Christ being once raised from the dead dieth no more. Whereby he teacheth, that this newness of life must be followed after of Christians their whole life; for if they ought to represent in themselves, by the mortification of the flesh, the image of Christ and life of the Spirit, that must be done once for all, but this must continue still. Not as though the flesh were mortified in us in a moment, as we said of late; but because we must not (revolt or) go back in mortifying the flesh; for if we turn back unto our filthiness we deny Christ, of whom we cannot be partakers but by newness of life, even as he leadeth a life incorruptible.

How mortification must be once for all.

9. *Death hath no more power over him.* He seemeth to

Digitized by Google

insinuate that death did once conquer or rule over Christ. And verily, when he gave himself to death for us, he did in a sort subject himself unto the power of death, yet with that condition, that it was impossible for him to be holden bound with the sorrows of it, to be overcome or swallowed up of it. Therefore, in yielding unto the power of death for a moment, he swallowed up death for ever. Albeit, in speaking more simply, the power of death is referred unto the voluntary condition of death, to whom [which] resurrection hath set an end, the meaning is: Christ, who now quickeneth the faithful with his Spirit, or inspireth life into them by his secret power from heaven, was exempted from the power of death when he rose again, that he might deliver all his from the same.

Christ for a while yielded unto death.

10. *He died to sin once.* Whereas he said, that we, after the example of Christ, are loosed for ever from the yoke of death, now he applieth it unto his [its] purpose, namely, that we are no longer subject unto the tyranny of sin; and that he declareth by the final cause of the death of Christ, inasmuch as he died that he might extinguish sin.

Furthermore, in the phrase of speech is to be noted what is proper unto Christ. For he saith not, he is dead unto sin, that he might cease to sin, like as it must be said, if the talk be of us: but because [that] he died for sin, [in order] that offering himself the price of our redemption, he might bring the power and authority of sin unto nought. And he saith that he *died once*, not only because eternal redemption being purchased by his only one sacrifice, and purgation of sin being made by his blood, he hath sanctified the faithful for ever, but also, that we might be answerable by a mutual resemblance (or similitude.) For albeit death spiritual hath his continual proceedings in us, yet are we properly said to die once, while Christ, by his blood reconciling us to the Father, doth also, by the virtue of his Spirit, regenerate us.

Heb. x. 14.

In that he liveth. Whether you expound it with Christ or in God, all cometh to one sense. For his meaning is, he now liveth a life subject to no mortality, in the immortal and incorruptible kingdom of God; the figure whereof ought to

Digitized by Google

appear in the regeneration of the godly. Here we are to keep in mind the word *similitude*. For he saith not, we shall live in heaven as Christ liveth there; but he maketh that new life which, by regeneration, we lead in earth, conformable to his celestial life. And whereas he saith we must die to sin after his example, it is not so that it may be called the same death. For we die to sin, when sin dieth in us, but it is otherwise in Christ, who, by dying, did put sin to flight. Now verily, whereas he said before, we believe there is a life which shall be common unto us, by the word *believe*, he sufficiently showeth that he speaketh of the grace of Christ. For if he had only admonished us of our duty, he should have said thus, Seeing we are dead with Christ, we must likewise live with him. And this word *believe* noteth that the doctrine of faith is handled here, which is grounded upon the promises; as though it were said, Christians ought to resolve themselves, that through the benefit of Christ they are so dead according to the flesh, that the same Christ may continue in them newness of life unto the end. The future tense in the verb, *live*, doth not appertain unto the last resurrection; but simply noteth the perpetual course of a new life so long as we live in this world.

The figure of Christ's celestial life ought to appear in the regeneration of the godly.

11. *Even so you esteem yourselves, &c.* Now is added that definition of the analogy which I touched. For whereas he said that Christ died once for sin, and liveth for ever unto God, applying both unto us, he now admonisheth how we may die in living, namely, when we renounce sin. But withal, he omitteth not that part, namely, when we have once embraced the grace of Christ by faith, although the mortification of the flesh be but begun in us, yet, in this same is the life of sin extinguished, that instead thereof spiritual newness, which is heavenly, might dure for ever. For, except Christ did kill sin in us once, even unto the end, his grace should not be firm and stable. The meaning, therefore, of the word is, Esteem the case is thus with you—as Christ died once that he might slay sin, so you must die once that you may cease to sin hereafter, yea, you must daily proceed in that mortification which is begun in you, until sin

How we may die, even while we live.

Digitized by Google

be utterly extinguished. As Christ was raised unto an incorruptible life, so ye must be regenerate by the grace of God, that ye may lead your whole life in holiness and righteousness; seeing this virtue of the Holy Spirit, whereby ye are renewed, is eternal, and shall flourish for ever. I had rather keep the words of Paul, *in Christ Jesus*, than, with Erasmus, to translate it, *by Christ;* for so the grafting is better expressed which maketh us one with Christ.

12. *Let not sin, therefore, reign in our mortal body, that ye might obey it in the lusts thereof.*
13. *And give not your members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; but give yourselves to God, as living from the dead; and your members weapons of righteousness unto God.*

12. *Let not sin, therefore, reign.* Now he beginneth an exhortation, which voluntarily ariseth out of that doctrine which he delivered of our communication with Christ. Albeit sin abideth in us, yet is it absurd that it should be of power to reign in us, for the virtue of sanctification ought to have the superiority over it, that our life might testify we are indeed the members of Christ. Of late I admonished that this word, *body*, is not to be taken for the flesh, skin, and bones, but (if I may say so) for the whole mass of man. And that may be gathered more certainly out of this present place; because another member,[1] which he will add straightway concerning the parts of the body, is also extended unto the soul. And so Paul meaneth even grossly[2] the earthly man; for the corruption of our nature causeth that we show forth nothing worthy of our original. So God also, while he complaineth that man is become flesh or carnal as the brute beasts, leaveth nothing unto him but what is earthly. Hereunto appertaineth that saying of Christ, *That which is born of flesh is flesh.* For if any object that there is another consideration of the soul,[3] the answer is at hand,

By body, is meant the whole corrupted mass of man.

Gen. vi. 3

John iii. 6.

[1] "Alterum membrum," the other clause. [2] "Sic...crasse... significat," thus coarsely, in such disparaging terms, designates.
[3] "Aliam esse animæ rationem," that a different account is given of the soul, that the case of the soul is different.

Digitized by Google

namely, as we are now degenerate, our souls are so fastened to the earth, and so addicted to our bodies, that they are fallen from their dignity (or excellency.) Furthermore, the nature of man is called corporeal, because he being deprived of celestial grace, is only a certain deceivable shadow or image. And add, that this body is called mortal of Paul by contempt, that he might teach how the noble nature of man inclineth unto death and destruction. Now verily he called sin,[1] that first corruption abiding in our souls, which draweth us to sin, whence properly all evil deeds and abominations flow. Between that and us he putteth concupiscences in the midst, that that might be instead of a king, concupiscences as statutes and commandments.[2]

13. *Give not your members.* When sin hath once got the dominion in our soul, all our members are straightway given over into his (obsequy or) obedience. Wherefore he describeth here the kingdom of sin by the sequels,[3] that he might declare the better what we must do, if we will shake off his yoke. And he borroweth his similitude from warfare, while he calleth our members weapons; like as if he said, as a soldier hath always weapons in a readiness, to use them as often as he shall be commanded by his captain, and never useth them but at his appointment; so Christians ought to esteem all their members to be weapons of the spiritual warfare. If, therefore, they abuse any member of theirs unto wickedness, they are worthy to be blamed.[4] But, by the oath of warfare they have bound themselves to God and Christ, by which oath they are tied. They ought, therefore, to have nothing to do with the camps of sin. They may see here by what right they can pretend the name of Christian, whose whole members being as it were the brothel houses of Satan, are ready to commit all filthiness. On the contrary, now he biddeth us give ourselves wholly to God; namely, that we, restraining our mind and heart from all

We are the soldiers of Christ, and ought to have nothing to do with the camps of sin.

[1] "Peccatum appellat," he gives the name of sin to. [2] "Ut illud sit in loco regis, concupiscentiæ sint velut edicta et imperia," that the former (viz. sin) might have the office of king, and the latter be as it were his commands and edicts. [3] "A consequentibus," by its results. [4] "Peccato merent," they are in the service, or are the mercenaries of sin.

Digitized by Google

wandering, whereunto the lusts of the flesh draw us, might intend upon the will of God only, might be ready to receive his commandments, and prepared to obey his precepts; that our members also might be destinated and consecrated to his pleasure; that all the powers of our soul and body might savour nothing but his glory. And the reason is added, because it is not in vain that the former life being done away, the Lord hath created us to a new, after which actions and deeds ought to follow.

14. *For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace.*
15. *What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*
16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye have given yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye do obey; whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*
17. *But thanks be to God, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart the type of doctrine whereinto ye have been brought.*
18. *And, being freed from sin, ye are made the servants of righteousness.*

14. *For sin shall not have dominion.* It is not necessary to abide long in reciting and refuting those expositions which have none or but little show of truth. There is one which may more probably be suffered than the rest, namely, which taketh this word, *under the law*, for *to be subject unto the letter of the law*, which doth not renew the mind; as, again, *to be under grace*, is as much *as by the Spirit of grace to be freed from evil concupiscences.* But that exposition is not simply allowed of me;[1] for, if we take that sense, whereunto shall that interrogation tend which followeth straightway? "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law?" The apostle would never have subjected[2] such a question, except he had meant that we are freed from the rigour of the law, that God might no more deal with us according to extreme justice; wherefore, there is no doubt but his meaning is to show here

[1] "Sed neque ipsa mihi simpliciter probatur," but neither do I altogether approve of that exposition. [2] "Subjecisset," subjoined.

Digitized by Google

some deliverance from the bondage of the law of the Lord.[1] But, all contention laid apart, I will briefly declare what I think. And, first, here seemeth unto me to be a consolation, wherewith the faithful are confirmed, that they faint not in the study of holiness through the feeling of their weakness. He did exhort them that they should apply all their powers unto the obedience of righteousness. But, so long as they carry about the relics of the flesh, they must needs halt somewhat. Therefore, lest they, being overcome with the knowledge of their infirmity, should despair, he preventeth this in time, comforting them in this, that their works are not to be examined according to the severe rule of the law; but, their impurity being remitted, God doth favourably and mercifully accept of them. The yoke of the law cannot be borne, but it breaketh or crusheth those that bear it; it remaineth, therefore, that the faithful flee unto Christ, and desire him to be their deliverer. And so he offereth himself; for to this end took he upon him the servitude of the law, whereunto otherwise he was not a debtor, that he might deliver those [who] were under the law, as the apostle saith unto the Galatians. Therefore, *not to be under the law* signifieth, not only that by the dead letter is prescribed unto us that which maketh us guilty, because we are unable to perform it; but also, that we are not subject unto the law, as it requireth perfect righteousness, pronouncing death against all those [who] transgress it in any part. Under the name of *grace*, we understand likewise both parts of redemption, that is, the remission of sins, whereby God imputeth righteousness unto us; and the sanctification of the Spirit, by the which he frameth us anew unto good works. I take the particle adversative to be put for a causal, which happeneth often, as though it were said, Because we are under grace, therefore we are not under the law. Now the sense shall be plain. For the apostle's mind is to comfort us, that we faint not in the study of well-doing, for that we feel as yet in ourselves many imperfections. For, howsoever

Gal. iv. 5. What is the meaning when it is said, we are not under the law.

[1] "Quin hic aliquam ab ipsa Domini lege manumissionem indicare voluerit," that he here means to indicate some kind of exemption even from the law of the Lord.

Digitized by Google

we be vexed with the sting of sin, yet it cannot subdue us, because we get the upperhand through the Spirit of God. Moreover, being under grace, we are free from the severe exaction of the law. Here, furthermore, the apostle is to be understood to take it for a thing granted, that all they who are destitute of the grace of God, being bound unto the yoke of the law, are holden under condemnation. And so, on the contrary, a man may argue, that so long as men are under the law, they are subject to the power of sin.

15. *What then?* Because the wisdom of the flesh always crieth out against the mysteries of God, he necessarily addeth this *preoccupation.*[1] For, seeing the law is the rule of righteousness, and was given to govern men, we think that it being broken,[2] straightway all discipline falleth to the ground; the bars are broken, and, finally, there remaineth no choice or difference of good and evil. But herein we are deceived, that by the abrogation of the law we think that righteousness is abolished, which God commendeth unto us in the law. For this is not to be drawn unto the precepts teaching a right form of life, which Christ confirmeth and establisheth, rather than abrogateth. And this, verily, is the proper solution, that nothing else is taken away but the curse of the law, whereunto all men that are out of grace be subject. But Paul, albeit he doth not expressly show that, yet indirectly he declareth it.

We are not delivered from the obedience of the commandments, but from the curse of the law.

16. *God forbid. Know ye not?* It is not a bare rejection, as some have thought, as though he had rather detest such a question than refute it. For straight after followeth a confutation, taken from the nature of contraries, almost to this sense, Between the yoke of Christ and sin, there is more contrariety than that any can together bear them both. If we sin we deliver ourselves into the servitude of sin; but, on the contrary, the faithful are redeemed from the tyranny of sin that they might serve Christ; therefore, it is impossible they should abide bound unto sin. But it shall

[1] "Prolepsis." [2] "Soluta," loosed, repealed.

Digitized by Google

be profitable more nearly to discuss the order of this argument as it is digested of Paul.

To whom you obey. This relative hath the force of a particle causal, as it doth often come to pass. Like as if one said, There is no kind of wickedness a parricide will not do, who doubted not to commit the greatest mischief of all, and such a cruelty as in itself is almost abhorred of the very beasts. And the reason of Paul is taken partly from the effects, partly from the nature of correlatives. For, first, if they obey, he gathereth they are servants, because their obedience testifieth that he hath power to command who bringeth them so into his obsequy.[1] This reason is taken from the effect of servitude, out of the which ariseth that other, If ye be servants, then, again, is the power of dominating in him.

Or of obedience. He speaketh improperly. For if he would have made one part answer another, he should have said, *or of righteousness* unto life. But seeing the inversion of the words did hinder nothing the sense of the matter, he chose rather, by the name *of obedience*, to express what righteousness is. Wherein yet there is the figure Μετωνυμια, because obedience is taken for the commandments of God, which are to be obeyed. And whereas he hath put down this word *obedience*, without any addition, thereby he declareth it is God only unto whose authority consciences ought to be subject. And, therefore, obedience, yea though the name of God be not expressed, nevertheless is referred unto God, for it cannot be manifold.

Obedience put for the commandments that are to be obeyed.

17. *But thanks be unto God.* This is the application of the similitude unto the present cause; wherein, although they were only to have been admonished that they are not the servants of sin, he addeth a thanksgiving, first, that he might teach how it is not of their own merit, but of the singular mercy of God; and also, that by the thanksgiving they might learn how great a benefit of God it is, and so much the more might be encouraged to detest sin. And he

[1] "In suum obsequium," into subjection to himself.

Digitized by Google

Wherefore Paul giveth thanks.

giveth thanks, not in respect of that time wherein they were the servants of sin, but for that deliverance [which] followed, while they ceased to be that [which] they were before. And this secret comparison of the former estate with the present hath an emphasis. For the apostle taketh up the slanderers of the grace of Christ, while he showeth that that [grace] ceasing, all mankind is holden captive under sin; but so soon as that showeth itself the kingdom of sin ceaseth.

Hereupon we may gather, that we are not, therefore, freed from the servitude of the law that we should sin; because the law doth not loose his dominion (or power) before the grace of God have taken us to itself, that it might restore righteousness in us; and, therefore, it is impossible we should be under sin when the grace of God reigneth in us. For we showed before, that under this word is contained the spirit of regeneration.

You have obeyed from the heart. Here, also, Paul compareth, by the way of contrariety, the secret virtue of the Spirit with the external letter, as though he said, Christ inwardly frameth our hearts better than if the law should force them by threatening and terrifying. And so is that obloquy done away, namely, If Christ deliver us from the subjection of the law, he bringeth liberty of sin; seeing he doth not deliver his, that they should live as they list, or that they should triumph without modesty,[1] as loose horses through the fields, but leadeth them unto the best kind of life. Although Erasmus, following the old interpreter, chooseth rather to translate it *form*, I am constrained to leave [retain] this word *type*, which word Paul useth; except some, peradventure, had rather turn it *example*. For he seemeth unto me to note the express image of that righteousness which Christ graveth in our hearts. And that answereth to the prescript (or determinate) rule of the law, whereunto all our actions ought to be formed, that they lean not to the right or left hand.

To what end we are delivered from sin in Christ.

18. *But being freed from sin.* The meaning is, it is absurd that any, after he is delivered out of bondage, should

[1] "Sine modestia exultent," scamper up and down without restraint.

Digitized by Google

abide in the condition of servitude; for he ought to defend that state of liberty which he hath received. It is not meet, then, that you should be brought again under the power of sin, from the which you were delivered by the manumitting of Christ. This argument is taken from the efficient cause. There followeth also another, taken from the final cause, namely, To this end are ye exempted from the servitude of sin, that ye might pass into the kingdom of righteousness; therefore, ye ought to be altogether unmindful of sin, and to turn your whole mind unto righteousness—into the obedience whereof ye are brought. And it is to be noted, that no man can serve righteousness, except by the power and benefit of God he be first delivered from the power and tyranny of sin. As Christ himself testifieth, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." What, then, shall our preparations, by the virtue of our free will, be, if the beginning of goodness depend upon this manumission, which the only grace of God accomplisheth?

They only can serve righteousness whom Christ hath delivered from the tyranny of sin. John viii. 36.

19. *I speak after the manner of man, because of the infirmity of your flesh; as ye have given your members servants of uncleanness, and to iniquity, into iniquity, even so now also give your members servants of righteousness, unto sanctification.*

19. *I speak, &c.* He saith that he speaketh after the manner of man, not in respect of the substance, but in respect of the form; as Christ, in the 3d of John, saith, that he offereth earthly things, whilst, notwithstanding, he intreateth of heavenly mysteries, but yet not so honourably as the dignity of things required, because he would humble himself unto the capacity of the rude and simple people. And thus the apostle speaketh, by the way of preface, that he might the better show that calumniation to be too gross and wicked, when the freedom got by Christ is thought to give liberty of sinning. And withal he advertiseth the faithful, that nothing can be more absurd, or rather filthy and shameful, than that the spiritual grace of Christ should be of less force with them than an earthly manumission (or free-

How Paul speaketh after the manner of man. John iii. 12.

Digitized by Google

dom.) As though he said, "By the comparing of righteousness and sin, I can show how much more fervently ye ought to be drawn into the obsequy of that than ever ye obeyed this; but yet, that I might something pardon your weakness, I omit that comparison. Howbeit, that I may deal with you very favourably, this I may, by right, require of you, that, at the least, ye do not embrace righteousness more coldly, or negligently, than ye have served sin." And therein is included a certain kind of silence (or concealing,) when we will have more understood than we express by words. For he doth, nevertheless, exhort them to obey righteousness so much the more studiously, as it is more worthy than sin to be served; although he seemeth not to require so much in words.

As ye have given. That is, Seeing before this all your members were so ready to obey sin, thereby it easily appeared how miserably the pravity of your flesh did hold you captive and bound; now, therefore, in like sort, be prone and ready to be ruled of God; and let not your courage be less now in doing of good than it was before in doing of evil. He doth not observe the order of the antithesis, to apply
1 Thes. iv. 7. the parts on both sides; as to the Thessalonians he opposeth uncleanness against holiness; yet his meaning is apparent. First, he setteth down two kinds, uncleanness and iniquity; the first whereof is opposed to chastity and sanctimony; the other hath respect unto injuries, whereby our neighbours are hurt. Moreover, he repeateth this word
Iniquity hath a twofold acception. *iniquity* twice, in a divers sense. For, in the first place, it signifieth rapines, deceits, perjuries, and all kind of injuries; in the second place, it signifieth the universal corruption of life; as if it were put thus, Ye have given over your members to commit wicked works, that the kingdom of sin might flourish in you. I understand *righteousness* to be put for the law and rule of a right life, whose end is sanctification; namely, that the faithful consecrate themselves in purity to the worship of God.

20. *For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.*

Digitized by Google

21. *What fruit had ye, then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For their end is death.*
22. *But now, being freed from sin, and made the servants of God, ye have your fruit in holiness, and the end everlasting life.*
23. *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

20. *For when ye were.* Yet he repeateth that contrariety between the yoke of sin and righteousness, whereof he made mention before; for sin and righteousness are things so contrary, that he which voweth himself to one must needs depart from the other. And that he doth to the end, that while they are looked upon, either of them by themselves, it might more easily appear what a man is to look for of them both; for separation (or distinction) helpeth in the consideration of the nature of every thing; therefore, he setteth sin on one hand, and righteousness on the other; then, having put a difference, he showeth what doth follow on both sides. Let us, therefore, remember that the apostle doth yet argue from contraries, after this manner, So long as ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness; now, on the contrary, ye must serve righteousness, because ye are free from the yoke of sin. He calleth those free from righteousness who are holden by no rein of obedience to the study of righteousness. This is the (liberty or) licentiousness of the flesh, which freeth us so from God, that it maketh us the bond-slaves of the devil. Miserable and cursed, then, is that liberty, which, by an unbridled, or, rather, by a mad fury, triumpheth to [our] destruction.

Who are called free from righteousness.

21. *What fruit, therefore, &c.* He could not any way more substantially express his mind than by appealing to their conscience, and, as it were, in their person to be ashamed. For the godly, as soon as they begin to be illuminated by the Spirit of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel, all the former part of their life, which they have led out of Christ, they do willingly acknowledge to have been damnable; and they are so far from going about to excuse themselves, that rather they are ashamed of themselves; and

Digitized by Google

also they do always call to mind the remembrance of their ignominy, to the end they being so ashamed, might more truly and more readily be humbled before the Lord; neither is it in vain he saith,

Now ye are ashamed. For he insinuateth with how blind love of ourselves we are taken, while we are plunged in the mists of sin, that we esteem not of so great uncleanness in us. It is only the light of the Lord which can open our eyes, that they may see the corruption [which] lurketh in our flesh. To conclude, therefore, he is indued with the principles of Christian philosophy, who, indeed, is displeased with himself, and hath learned well to be ashamed of his own misery. Finally, by the consequent, he showeth yet more plainly how greatly they ought to be ashamed, when they understand that they were even at the threshold of death and destruction; yea, were already entered the gates of death, if they had not been drawn back by the mercy of God.

Who is truly indued with the principles of Christian religion.

A twofold end of sin and righteousness.

22. *You have your fruit.* As before he put down a twofold end of sin, so now of righteousness. Sin, in this life, bringeth the torments of an evil conscience, and after this life eternal death. Of righteousness, in this life we reap for fruit, sanctification; in time to come, we hope for eternal life. These things, unless we be too sottish, ought to beget in us a hatred and horror of sin, and a love and desire of righteousness; and whereas some do take this word, τέλος, for *tribute*, I think it is not the meaning of the apostle; for although it is true that we suffer the punishment of death for sin, yet that word cannot agree to the other member, whereunto it is applied of Paul. For life is not called the tribute of righteousness.

23. *For the wages of sin.* There are some which think that here is noted displeasantly how hard a wage is paid to sinners, while Paul compareth death to *kates*, which word, with the Grecians, sometimes is taken for the diet of soldiers; but rather he seemeth indirectly to check the blind appetites of those who dangerously entangle them-

Digitized by Google

selves with the enticements of sin, no otherwise than fishes with the hook. Howbeit it shall be more simply to take it for (stipends or) wages; for surely death is a very sufficient reward for the reprobate; and it is the conclusion, and as it were the epilogue of the former sentence. And yet is it not in vain that he repeateth the same thing in other words again; for, by doubling the terror, he would make sin more detestable.

But the gift of God. They are deceived which translate this proposition thus, life eternal is the gift of God, as though righteousness were the *subjectum*, (subject,) and gift of God *predicatum*, (predicate;) because that sense should make nothing unto the contraposition; but as before he taught that sin bringeth forth nothing but death, so now he added, that this gift of God, namely, our justification and sanctification, bringeth unto us the blessedness of eternal life. Or, if you had rather, as sin is the cause of death, so righteousness, wherewith we are indued by Christ, hath restored eternal life unto us. In the meanwhile, here we may most certainly gather that our salvation is wholly of the grace, and mere bountifulness of God. He might otherwise have said, the wages of righteousness is eternal life, that one member might have answered another; but he saw it was the gift of God, whereby we obtain life, and not our merit. And that gift, also, is not one, nor single; for we being clothed with the righteousness of the Son are reconciled to God, and by the virtue of the Spirit renewed into holiness of life. And, therefore, he addeth, *in Christ Jesus our Lord*, that he might draw us from all opinion of our own worthiness.

What is meant by the gift of God, and what fruit the same bringeth forth in us.

CHAPTER VII.

1. *Do ye not know, brethren, (for I speak to them* [who] *know the law,) that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?*

Digitized by Google

2. *For the woman which is in subjection to a man, is bound by the law to the man while he liveth; but if the man be dead she is delivered from the law of man.*
3. *So, then, if while the man liveth she take another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if the man be dead she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she take another man.*
4. *So ye, my brethren, are dead also to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be unto another, even unto him that is raised up from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

ALTHOUGH he had sufficiently (as in such brevity it could be) unfolded the question of the abrogation of the law; yet, because it was both a difficult question, and of itself might bring forth many others, he doth more copiously declare how the law is abrogated from [in regard to] us. Secondly, he showeth what profit we get thereby; because, while it doth hold us bound without Christ, it can do nothing but condemn us. And lest any should thereby accuse the law, he meeteth with[1] the objections of the flesh and refuteth them; where he excellently handleth a notable place of the use of the law.[2]

To what end the law was given.

1. *Do ye not know.* Let the general proposition be, that the law was given to no other end unto men, than that it should govern this present life; with those [that] be dead it hath no place. Whereunto, afterward, he addeth a more special,[3] namely, that we are dead unto the law in the body of Christ. Some others understand that the dominion of the law abideth so long to bind us as the use thereof is in force. But because this sentence is somewhat obscure, and it doth not so properly agree unto that special proposition [which] followeth straightway, I had rather follow those who take it to be spoken of the life of man, and not of the life of the law. And the interrogation, verily, hath more strength to set forth the certainty of the matter [that] is spoken of;

[1] "Excipit," takes up. [2] "Ubi locum insignem de usu legis eleganter tractat," and there elegantly comments on a celebrated passage concerning the use of the law. [3] "Hypothesin," this position.

Digitized by Google

for it showeth that that is not strange or unknown to any of them; but is indifferently granted among all.

For I speak to them [who] *have knowledge.* This parenthesis is to be referred thither whither the proposition is referred, as if he should say, That he knew they were not so unskilful of the law as they could doubt of that. And albeit both might be understood of all laws together, yet is it better to understand it of the law of God, which is now in question. Whereas some think the knowledge of the law is attributed unto the Romans, because the best part of the world was under their empire and government, that is very childish. For partly he speaketh unto Jews or other strangers, partly unto vulgar and obscure men. Yea, he chiefly respecteth the Jews, with whom he had to do concerning the abrogation of the law. And lest they should think they were dealt withal very captiously, he showeth that he taketh a principle common and known to them all, whereof they could not be ignorant who were brought up from their infancy in the doctrine of the law.

2. *For the woman which is in subjection to the man.* He bringeth a similitude, whereby he proveth that we are so freed from the law, that it hath properly, and by right, no power over us any more. And albeit he could have proved it by other reasons, yet, because the example of matrimony served very well to set out the matter instead of a confirmation, he hath inserted a similitude taken from thence. Howbeit, lest it should trouble any man, that the members compared one with another do not agree at all,[1] we are to be admonished that the mind of the apostle was purposely, by a little inversion, to avoid the spite of a more (rigorous or) severe word. He should have said, that he might have framed his similitude in order, The woman after the death of her husband is loosed from the bond of matrimony; the law, which is instead of an husband to us, is dead unto us; therefore, we are free from the power thereof. But lest he

[1] "Non omnino respondent," do not altogether correspond.

Digitized by Google

should offend the Jews with the asperity of the word, if he had said that the law was dead, he used a (digression or) deflection, saying, we are dead to the law. He seemeth unto many to argue from the lesser to the greater; yet, because I fear lest that be more wrested, I rather allow the former interpretation, which is more simple. The whole argument, therefore, is to be directed into this order: The woman is bound unto her husband by the law so long as he liveth, so that she cannot take another; but after the death of her husband she is loosed from the bond of that law, so that she may marry whom she will.

Then followeth the application:—

The law was, as it were, our husband, under whose yoke we were holden till it was dead unto us.

After the death of the law, Christ took us; that is, joined us, being freed from the law, unto himself. Therefore, we, being joined unto Christ risen from the dead, ought to cleave unto him only; and as the life of Christ after his resurrection is eternal, so after this there shall be no divorcement.

The word law diversly taken.

Moreover, the word *law* is not always here put in one and the same sense; but sometimes it signifieth the mutual right of wedlock, sometimes the authority of the husband, to whom the wife is subject, sometimes the doctrine of Moses. And we are to remember that Paul doth here touch that part only which is proper unto the ministry of Moses. For, as concerning the Ten Commandments, wherein God hath delivered what is right, and hath ordered our life, we are not to dream of any abrogation of the law, because the will of God ought to stand for ever. Therefore, we are diligently to remember that this deliverance is not from that righteousness [which] is taught in the law, but from the severe exaction of the law, and that curse [which] proceedeth thence. Then the rule of life which the law prescribeth is not abrogated, but that quality which is opposed to the liberty purchased by Christ, namely, whilst it requireth absolute perfection, because we perform it not, it holdeth us bound under the guilt of eternal death. But be-

Digitized by Google

cause his meaning was not here to decide what the right of matrimony is, he was not greatly careful to reckon up the causes which make a woman free from her husband. Unaptly, therefore, should sure doctrine in that respect be sought for here.

4. *By the body of Christ.* First of all, Christ having erected the banner of his cross, did triumph over sin; which could not be unless the handwriting were cancelled wherein we were bound. That handwriting is the law, which, whilst it standeth in force, maketh us debtors unto sin, and, therefore, is called the strength of sin. From the power, therefore, of this handwriting we are delivered in the body of Christ, whilst it is fastened to his cross. But the apostle goeth further, namely, saying, that the bond of the law was loosed. Not that we should live according to our minds, as a widow woman is left to her own mind whilst she is a widow, but we are now bound to another husband, yea, from hand to hand (as they say) we are passed from the law unto Christ. In the meanwhile, he mitigateth the austerity of the sentence, when he saith, that Christ delivered us from the yoke of the law, that he might graft us into his own body. For although Christ did voluntarily subject himself unto the law for a time, yet is it not meet the law should have dominion over him. Furthermore, that liberty which is proper to him he communicateth also to his members. Therefore, it is no marvel if he deliver those from the yoke of the law whom he coupleth unto himself by a sacred connection, that they might be one body with him.

How the law is the strength of sin.

His who was raised from the dead. We have already said that Christ is put in the place of the law, lest any liberty should be imagined without him, or lest any should dare to make a divorcement from the law, not being yet dead to himself. Now, he useth this circumlocution to note the eternity of that life which Christ hath purchased by his resurrection, that Christians might know this copulation [union] is perpetual. Finally, he speaketh more clearly of the spiritual matrimony of Christ with his church [in the Epistle] to the Ephesians.

The life purchased by Christ is eternal.

Eph. vi.

Digitized by Google

That we might bring forth fruit to God. He always addeth the final cause, lest any, under this pretence, that Christ hath delivered us from the servitude of the law, should cocker [indulge] the flesh, and the lusts thereof. For he offered us with himself in sacrifice to the Father, and to this end he regenerateth us, that we might fructify to God in newness of life. And we know what fruits our heavenly Father requireth of us; namely, holiness and righteousness. Neither is it prejudicial to our liberty if we serve God. Yea, if we will enjoy so excellent a benefit of Christ, afterward we are not but to study how the glory of God may be advanced,[1] for which cause Christ hath taken us; otherwise we abide still not only the servants of the law, but of sin and death.

What fruits we should bring forth in Christ.

5. *For when we were in the flesh, the affections of sins, which are by the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*
6. *But now we are delivered from the law, being dead unto it, wherein we were holden; that we should serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.*

5. *For when we were.* By the contrary he showeth yet more plainly how ill those that are zealous of the law deal, to detain the faithful yet under the power thereof. For so long as the literal doctrine of the law ruleth and beareth sway, the lasciviousness of the flesh is not bridled, but rather it increaseth. Whereby it followeth that the kingdom of righteousness is not established till Christ have freed us from the law. And withal Paul admonisheth what works do become us, being loosed from the law. So long, therefore, as a man is holden under the yoke of the law, by sinning continually, he can bring nothing unto himself but death. If the service of the law begetteth sin only, then deliverance, which is contrary, must tend unto righteousness; if that lead unto death, then this unto life. But let

[1] "Posthac non licet nisi de promovenda Dei gloria cogitare," it is henceforth unlawful for us to think of anything but of promoting the glory of God.

Digitized by Google

us consider the very words of Paul. Whilst he goeth about to describe that time wherein we were under the dominion of the law, he saith we were in the flesh. Whereby we understand, that all they which are under the law reap nothing else thereby than that, without fruit and efficacy, their ears are beaten with the external breath thereof, seeing they are inwardly destitute of the Spirit of God. Therefore, they must needs abide altogether corrupt and perverse, until a better remedy come to heal their disease. And note the usual phrase of the Scripture, *to be in the flesh*,[1] for to be indued only with the gifts of nature, without that special grace wherewith God vouchsafeth his elect. Furthermore, if this whole state of life be corrupt, it is apparent that naturally there is no part of our soul sound; neither is there any other power of free will, but that it may send forth evil affections as darts into every part.

What it is to be in the flesh.

Affections of sins which are by the law. That is, the law did stir up evil affections in us, which did declare their efficacy in all our members; for there is no part which did not serve the evil affections. This is the work of the law; namely, to inflame our hearts the more, that they should burst forth into such lusts, if that inward Master of the spirit be not present. But observe here, that the law is matched with the corrupt nature of man; whose perversity and lust, the more it is restrained by the bars of the law, the more furiously it bursteth forth. He addeth again, so long as the affections of the flesh were ruled under the law, they brought forth fruit unto death, that they might show how the law by itself killeth; whereby it followeth that they are foolish who so greatly covet after that service [which] bringeth death.

6. *But now we are freed from the law.* He pursueth his argument from contraries, If the hand of the law did so little prevail to bridle the flesh, that it was rather an increment of sin, then, of necessity, must we be loosed, that we may cease to sin. If, then, we be freed from the bondage of the law, that we might serve God, they do wickedly which take from hence

[1] "Efficaciam exerebant," exerted their power.

Digitized by Google

liberty of sinning. And they speak wickedly which say, by this means the reins are loosed to concupiscence. Note, therefore, we are then loosed from the law when God doth indue us, being freed from the severe exaction and curse thereof, with his Spirit, that we might walk in his ways.

Being dead to it. This part containeth a reason, or, rather, showeth the manner whereby we are delivered; namely, while the law is so far forth abrogated from us, that we be not oppressed with the burden thereof; or lest [so] that the severe rigour thereof overwhelm[1] us in the curse.

In the newness of the spirit. He opposeth the spirit against the letter, because, before that our will by the Holy Ghost be formed unto the will of God, we have nothing in the law but the outward letter; which, indeed, bridleth our external actions, but it restraineth not the fury of our concupiscence at all. He attributeth newness unto the Spirit, because it succeedeth in the stead of the old man; as the letter is called old, which perisheth by the regeneration of the Spirit.

Why newness is ascribed unto the Spirit.

7. *What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? God forbid. But I knew not sin but by the law. For I had not known concupiscence, except the law had said, Thou shalt not lust.*
8. *But sin took an occasion by the commandment, and wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.*

7. *What shall we say, then?* Because it was said, we must be delivered from the law, that we might serve God in the newness of spirit, this fault did seem to be in the law, as though it did drive us unto sin. But seeing that is very absurd, the apostle did very well to take in hand to refute it. When he demandeth, therefore, whether the law be sin? his meaning is, whether it beget sin, so that the fault thereof ought to be imputed to the law?

But I knew not sin. Then doth sin abide in us, and not in the law; because the cause of sin is the wicked concupiscence of our flesh, and we come into the knowledge thereof by the knowledge of the righteousness of God, which is declared unto us in the law. But you are not to understand it

Sin remaineth in us, and not in the law.

[1] "Prorsus reddi stupidos," make us altogether stupid.

Digitized by Google

as though there were no difference at all between right and wrong without the law. But that either we are too blind in seeing our corruption, or else, while we flatter ourselves we are altogether secure; as also it followeth,

For I had not known concupiscence. This is, therefore, a declaration of the former sentence, wherein he showeth that that ignorance of sin whereof he spake did stand in this, that men marked not their concupiscence. And purposely he persisteth in one kind, wherein chiefly hypocrisy reigneth, whereunto reckless pampering and security is alway annexed. For men are never so deprived of judgment, but external works keep with them their difference.[1] Yea, they are forced also to condemn wicked counsels, and such like devices; which they cannot do, but they must needs[2] give unto a right will that praise [which] is due unto it. But the fault of concupiscence is more hidden, and more deeply laid up; whereby it cometh to pass that it never cometh into question so long as men judge according to their sense. For he doth not boast himself to have been void of it, but he did so flatter himself, that he made no account of that sin lurking in his heart. For seeing he was deceived for a time, when he thought that righteousness could not be hindered by concupiscence, then at length he perceived he was a sinner, when he saw concupiscence (of the which no man is void) to be forbidden by the law.

Augustine saith that Paul, under this word, containeth the whole law; which, so that we understand it well, is true; for, when Moses showeth of what things we are to take heed, lest we offend or hurt our neighbour, he addeth, "Thou shalt not lust," which is to be referred unto all those precepts [which] went before. There is no doubt but in the former commandments he had condemned whatsoever wicked affections our hearts conceive; but there is great difference between a set will, and affections whereby we are tickled. Therefore, by this last precept, God requireth such integrity of us, that no corrupt lust should move us unto evil, howso-

Concupiscence without consent is sin.

[1] "Quin suum apud eos discrimen retineant externa opera," as not to retain the distinction between different kinds of external works.

[2] "Quemadmodum facere nequeunt quin tribuant," and this they cannot do without giving.

Digitized by Google

ever it be that we consent not unto it. And for this cause it was, I said, Paul did mount higher than the common capacity of man is able to reach. For politic laws cry that they punish the counsels and not the events.[1] And the philosophers more subtilely place both vices and virtues in the mind. But God, by this precept, pierceth unto the concupiscence, which is more secret than the will, and, therefore, men did not count it for sin. Neither was it only pardoned of the philosophers; but at this day the Papists contend mightily that it is not sin in the regenerate. But Paul saith, he found out his guiltiness by this lurking disease; whereupon it followeth that they are not excusable whoso are sick of it,[2] but so far forth as God doth pardon the fault. In the meanwhile, we are to hold that distinction between evil lusts, which come unto consent, and concupiscence, which only so tickleth and moveth the hearts that it stayeth in the middle way.

A twofold concupiscence.

8. *But sin took an occasion.* So then, whatsoever is evil, it ariseth of sin, and the corruption of the flesh; the occasion only is in the law. And although he may be supposed to speak of that provocation only, whereby, through the law, our lust is so stirred up that it bursteth forth into greater madness; yet I refer it chiefly unto knowledge, as though it were said, it discovereth in me all concupiscence, which, while it lay hidden, seemeth in a manner to be none. And yet I deny not but the flesh is more vehemently provoked unto concupiscence by the law; and so this way it cometh into light; which thing might also happen unto Paul. But that which I said of manifestation agreeth rather unto the text, [context;] for straightway he addeth:—

For without the law sin is dead.

9. *And I lived some time without law; but when the commandment came, sin revived.*

10. *But I died; and that commandment, which was ordained unto life, was found unto me to be unto death.*

[1] "Consilia se non eventus punire," punish intentions, not events.

[2] "Quicunque eo laborant, minime esse excusabiles," that those who labour under it are by no means excusable.

Digitized by Google

11. *For sin, taking an occasion by the commandment, led me out of the way, and by that killed me.*
12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

For without the law. Here he doth plainly express the meaning of the former words; for it is as much as if he said, the knowledge of sin, without the law, is buried. And it is the general sentence whereunto he doth by and by apply his example. Wherefore I marvel what the interpreters meant to translate it in the preterimperfect tense, as though Paul spake of himself; seeing it is apparent that his mind was to begin at an universal proposition, and afterward to open the matter by his [own] example.

9. *And I lived some time without law.* His meaning is to insinuate, that there was a time wherein, to him, or with him, sin was dead; for it is not to be understood that he was at any time lawless; but this word, *I lived*, is very significant; because the absence of the law made that he lived, that is, being puffed up with the confidence of his own righteousness, he challenged life unto himself, when, nevertheless, he was dead. That the sentence may be more clear, resolve it thus: When some time I was without law, I lived. And I said that this word was significant, because, in feigning himself righteous, he claimed unto himself life also. This, then, is the meaning: When I sinned without knowledge of the law, sin was so drowned, that I did not observe it, that it seemed almost to be dead: on the other side, I, because I did not see that I was a sinner, did please myself in myself, thinking that I had life at home with myself. For the death of sin is the life of man; again, the life of sin is the death of man. But the question is, what time that was, wherein, by the ignorance of the law, or (as he saith) by the absence of the law, he did confidently claim life unto himself; for sure it is, he was brought up of a child in the doctrine of the law. But that was a literal divinity,[1] which doth not humble his [its] disciples; for, as he saith in another place, the vail was in-

How Paul, being brought up of a child in the doctrine of the law, is said to have lived some time without law.

[1] "Literalis theologia," a theology of the letter.

Digitized by Google

2 Cor. iii. 14. terposed, that the Jews could not see the light of life in the law; so he also, so long as he, being void of the Spirit of Christ, had his eyes covered, did please himself in the external show of righteousness. He, therefore, counteth the law absent, which, though it were present before his eyes, yet did not smite him with a perfect sense of the judgment of the Lord. Thus are the eyes of hypocrites covered with a vail, that they see not how much this precept requireth, wherein we are forbidden of concupiscence.

But when the commandment came. So now, on the contrary, he counteth the law then to [be] come, when it began truly to be understood. The law, therefore, did (as a man would say) raise sin from the dead, because it discovered unto Paul, with how much corruption the inward parts of his heart abounded, and also did slay him. And let us alway remember, that he speaketh of a secure confidence, wherein hypocrites rest while they flatter themselves, because they wink at their sins.

10. *Was found unto me, &c.* Two things are said here: 1. namely, That the commandment showeth unto us the way of life in the righteousness of God; and therefore was given, that we observing the law of the Lord, might obtain eternal life, if the pravity of us all did not hinder it. 2. But, because there is none of us that keepeth the law, but rather we are altogether carried headlong into that kind of life, from the which it doth call us, it can bring nothing else but death. Thus we are to distinguish between the nature of the law and our corruption. Whereby it followeth, that whereas the law doth wound us unto death that is accidental, as if an incurable disease should be stirred up the more by an wholesome medicine. Indeed, I confess it is an inseparable accident, and therefore the law in another place, in respect of the gospel, is called the minister of death; but yet this abideth firm, that it is not hurtful unto us of his [its] own nature, but because our corruption doth provoke and cause his [its] curse.

The law in itself is the way of life. But that none are saved by the law, the cause is, for that none doth keep it.

2 Cor. iii. 7.

11. *Hath led me out of the way.* Verily true it is, although

Digitized by Google

the will of God be hidden from us, and no doctrine doth shine unto us, the whole life of men is wandering, and full of errors; yea, until the law doth show unto us the way of a right life, we can do nothing but wander. Yet, because then we begin to feel our error, when the Lord doth reprove us aloud, worthily saith Paul, that when sin is discovered, then we are led forth of the way. So then, the word ἐξαπατᾶν, that is, to lead out of the way, is not to be understood of the thing itself, but of knowledge; namely, for that by the law it is apparent how much we have declined from the right course; therefore, of necessity, it was to be translated, *hath led out of the way*, because hereby sinners (who went on securely before) began to have a loathing and disliking of themselves, while, after the filthiness of sin was revealed by the law, they understood how they made haste unto death. Finally, he inferreth[1] again the name of *occasion*, that we might know how the law, by itself, is not deadly; but that cometh otherwise, and is (as a man would say) foreign, or such as cometh by some other means.[2]

How we are said by occasion of the law to be led forth of the way.

12. *Wherefore the law is holy.* Some think there is a (repetition) doubling in words, *law and commandment;* to whom I do so consent, that I judge there is included a great *emphasis* (or force) to say, the law itself, and whatsoever is commanded in the law, that is all holy, and therefore is greatly to be reverenced; it is just, and therefore not to be charged with any unrighteousness; it is good, and therefore pure and clean from all corruption. So he cleareth the law of all accusations, lest any should ascribe that to the law which were not good, just, and holy.

13. *Was that then which is good made death unto me? God forbid. Yea, sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good; that sin might be out of measure sinful by the commandment.*

13. *Was that then which is good.* Hitherto he hath so

[1] "Inculcat," introduces.

[2] "Quasi adventitium," as it were adventitious.

Digitized by Google

cleared the law from all calumniations; that yet, notwithstanding, it remained doubtful whether it were the cause of death or no. Yea, here are men's minds wonderfully plunged[1] how it may be, that we should reap nothing but death of so singular a benefit of God. Now, therefore, he answereth that objection, denying that death is of the law, although through occasion thereof it is brought upon us by sin. And albeit this answer seemeth to be contrary unto that which he said before, namely, that the commandment which was ordained unto life was found death unto him; yet indeed there is no contrariety. For before, he meant that by our wickedness it cometh to pass, that we abuse the law to our destruction, otherwise than the nature of it doth bear; and here he denieth it to be the matter of death, that death should be imputed to it. In the 2d to the Corinthians he speaketh more freely of the law, where he calleth it the administration of death. Howbeit that he doth, as it is wont to be, in the heat of disputation; not respecting the nature of the law, but the opinion of the adversaries.

The law is not the material cause of death.

2 Cor iii. 7.

Yea, sin. Under the correction of others, I think it is to be read as I have put it down; and, therefore, I suppose this to be the sense, Sin in a manner is justified before it be detected by the law; but when by occasion of the law it is revealed, then, truly, it taketh the name of sin; and so much the more mischievous and (that I may say so) sinful it appeareth then, because it converteth the goodness of the law, being perverted to our destruction. For that must needs be a very poisonable thing, which causeth that, which otherwise by his [its] own nature is wholesome, to be hurtful. The meaning is, that it was meet the outrageousness of sin should be discovered by the law; for except sin did (as they say) burst forth by an outrageous and enormous excess, it should not be acknowledged for sin. This excess doth pour out itself more violently, whilst it converteth life into death. Therefore, then, is all excuse taken away.

14. *For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

[1] "Perplexæ," perplexed, puzzled.

Digitized by Google

15. *For I know not that which I do. For what I would, that I do not, but what I would not, that do I.*
16. *If I do then that I would not, I consent to the law of God that it is good.*
17. *Now, then, it is no more I that doth it, but the sin that dwelleth in me.*

14. *For we know.* Now he beginneth more nearly to compare the law with the nature of man, that it might more clearly appear whence the fault of death proceedeth. Secondly, he propoundeth an example of a regenerate man, in whom the relics of the flesh do so dissent from the law of the Lord, that yet the spirit doth willingly obey the same law. But, first of all, (as we said,) he setteth down a bare comparison of man's nature and the law. Seeing there is no greater variance in the world than of the Spirit and the flesh; the law is spiritual, man is carnal. What concord, then, hath the nature of man with the law? namely, such as the light hath with darkness. Furthermore, whereas he calleth the law *spiritual*, thereby he doth not only signify that it requireth the inward affections of the heart, (as many expound it,) but, according to the nature of an antithesis, it hath a signification contrary to the word *carnal*. The former interpreters we spoke of expound it thus, *The law is spiritual*, that is, it doth not only bind our hands and feet, in respect of external actions, but also is imposed upon the affections of the heart, and requireth the sincere fear of God; but here is expressed an antithesis, or contrarity between the flesh and the Spirit.

How the law is called spiritual.

Finally, By the text, it may sufficiently appear, and partly it hath been already declared, that under the name of flesh is comprehended whatsoever men bring with them out of their mother's womb. And men being taken for such as they are born, and for such as they be so long as they retain their own wit, are called flesh; for as they are corrupt, so they neither savour nor breathe any thing but that is gross and earthly. On the contrary, the Spirit is called the renewing of our corrupt nature, while God reformeth us to his image. And hence cometh that kind of speech, be-

Spirit put for the renewing of our corrupt nature.

Digitized by Google

cause that newness which is wrought in us is the gift of the Spirit. Wherefore the integrity of the doctrine of the law is set against the corruption of man's nature. The meaning, therefore, is, The law requireth a certain celestial and angelical righteousness, wherein there should appear no blot, to whose cleanness nothing ought to be wanting; but I, carnal man, can do nothing but strive against it. And that interpretation of Origen, which, notwithstanding, before this time, it hath pleased many, is unworthy to be refuted. He saith the law is called *spiritual* of Paul, because the Scripture is not literally to be understood. What is this unto the present case?

What men are by nature.

Sold under sin. By this parcel,[1] he showeth what flesh is of itself; for by nature man is no less the bond-slave of sin, than those bondmen bought with money, whom their masters abuse at their pleasure, like oxen or asses; we are so utterly mastered under the power of sin, that our whole mind, heart, and all our actions, bend towards sin. I do always except coaction;[2] for voluntarily we sin, because it were no sin, except it were voluntary; but we are so addicted unto sin, that we can do nothing freely but sin, because that corruption ruleth in us, draweth us hereunto. Wherefore this similitude importeth not (as they say) a (coacted or) forced astriction (or tying,) but a voluntary obsequy,[3] whereunto the ingrafted servitude addicteth us.

15. *For that which I do I know not.* Now, he descendeth unto a more particular example of a regenerate man, in whom both those things [which] he intendeth do more clearly appear; namely, how great discord there is between the law of God and man's nature, and how the law doth not of itself bring death; for truly seeing the carnal man, with all the inclination of his mind, doth rush into the lust of sinning, he seemeth to sin with such free election, that he might moderate himself if he would, as this pernicious opinion hath almost prevailed with all men; namely, that a man, by his own natural strength, without the help of God's

[1] "Particula," expression. [2] "Coactionem," compulsion. [3] "Obsequium," obedience.

Digitized by Google

grace, is able to elect whether he will. But, verily, whilst the will of a faithful man is led unto good by the Spirit of God, thereby appeareth plainly the corruption of nature, which obstinately resisteth and striveth to the contrary. Therefore, thou hast, in a regenerate man, a very fit example, whereby thou mayest know how contrary the righteousness of the law is to our nature. Hence also the declaration of the other member is more aptly drawn, than from the bare consideration of man's nature. For the law, because it bringeth forth nothing but death in that man which is altogether carnal, is there more easily charged; for it is doubtful whence the fault proceedeth. In the regenerate man it bringeth forth wholesome fruits, whereby appeareth that the flesh only is in the cause, that it quickeneth not; so far is it from generating death of itself.

That this disputation, therefore, may both more faithfully and more certainly be understood, we must note that this conflict, of the which the apostle speaketh, is not in any man before he be sanctified by the Spirit of God. For man, being left to his own nature, is wholly carried without resistance unto concupiscences; for although the wicked are tormented with the sting of their conscience, and cannot so flatter themselves in their vices, but that they have some taste of bitterness; yet thou canst not gather thereby that they either hate evil, or love that [which] is good. Only the Lord doth suffer them to be so tormented, that he might partly show unto them his judgment; not that he might put into them either a love of righteousness, or a hatred of sin.

We begin not to strive against sin before we be endued with the Spirit of sanctification.

This difference, therefore, there is between them and the faithful, that they (meaning the wicked) are never so blinded and hardened in their minds, but if they be admonished of their abominations, in the judgment of their own conscience they condemn them. For knowledge is not utterly extinguished in them, but they retain a difference of right and wrong. Sometime, also, through the feeling of their sin, they are so shaken with horror, that even in this life they sustain a kind of damnation. Nevertheless, they like sin with their whole heart; and, therefore, without any true resistance of the affection, they give themselves unto it.

A difference between the sting of sin in the wicked, and the feeling of sin in the godly.

Digitized by Google

For those stings of conscience, wherewithal they are stung, arise rather of the contradiction of judgment, than the contrary affection of the will. On the contrary, the godly, in whom the regeneration of God is begun, are so divided, that, with a special desire of the heart, they fervently aspire unto God, they covet celestial righteousness, and hate sin; but again, by the relics of their flesh, they are drawn towards the earth. Therefore, while they are thus distracted, they fight against their nature, and their nature fighteth against them. And they do not only condemn their sins, because they are forced thereunto by the judgment of reason, but because from the very heart they abhor them, and are displeased with them. This is that Christian warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, of the which Paul speaketh to the Gal. v. 17. Galatians. And therefore is it well said, that the carnal man, with the whole consent and agreement of mind, doth rush into sin; and that the division (or struggling) then first beginneth, when he is called of the Lord, and sanctified by his Spirit.

For regeneration is only begun in this life; the remnant of the flesh which remaineth doth always follow his [its] corrupt affections, and so moveth war against the Spirit. The unlearned, which consider not whereabout the apostle goeth, or what kind of dispensation he holdeth,[1] do think that the nature of man is here described. And certainly such a description of human wit there is amongst the philosophers. Howbeit, the Scripture setteth down a more deep philosophy, because, since the time that Adam was spoiled of the image of God, it saw nothing to remain in the heart of man, besides perversity (or frowardness.) So sophisters, when they go about to define free-will, or to estimate of what value the strength of nature is, seize upon this place. Howbeit, Paul (as I said) doth not here propound the bare nature of man; but under his own person, Paul describeth what and how great the infirmity of the faithful is. Augustine was some time in this common error, yet when he had more nearly sifted the place, he did not only retract that which

[1] "Quam agendi œconomiam teneat," what his plan is.

Digitized by Google

he had taught amiss, but, in his first book unto Boniface, by many stroug arguments he proveth, that it cannot otherwise be understood but of the regenerate. And we will do our endeavour that the readers may clearly see it is so.

I know not. His meaning is, that he did not acknowledge those works, which he did commit through the infirmity of the flesh, for his, because he did detest them; therefore, it is not amiss that Erasmus hath used the word *approve;* but because that might be ambiguous, I chose rather to retain the word *know*, or *understand.* Whereby we gather that the doctrine of the law is so agreeable unto right judgment, that the faithful refuse the transgression thereof as a brutish thing. And because Paul seemeth to confess that he taught otherwise than the law commandeth, many interpreters have been deceived, which have thought that he took upon him the person of another; hence came that common error, that some have supposed the nature of an unregenerate man to have been described in this whole chapter. But Paul, under the transgression of the law, includeth all the offences of the godly, who neither shake off the fear of God, nor study of well-doing. Therefore denieth he himself to do that which the law commandeth, because he doth it not absolutely, but in a manner fainteth in his endeavour.

What is meant by transgression.

For what I would do. You may not understand this to have been always in him, as though he could never do any good; but only he complaineth that he could not do that [which] he coveted; namely, that he could not prosecute that [which] was good with such alacrity as was meet, because he was holden in a manner bound; again, that he fainted in that wherein he would not, because he was feeble through the infirmity of the flesh. The godly mind, therefore, doth not that good it would, because it standeth not with courage as were meet; and it doth the evil it would not, because it desireth to stand, and falleth, or at the least shaketh. Howbeit, this will and nill must be referred unto the Spirit, which ought to have the principality in the faithful. Yea, the flesh hath his will; but Paul calleth that will, which he

How the godly do not that they would.

Digitized by Google

coveted with the special affection of his heart; and he calleth that contrary to his will which did gainstand the same.

Here, verily, we may gather that [which] we said, namely, that Paul here intreateth of the faithful, in whom that grace of the Spirit flourisheth, which doth illustrate the consent of a sound mind with the righteousness of the law, because the flesh cannot hate sin.

15. *And if I do that I would not, I consent to the law.* That is to say, while my heart doth recreate itself in the law, and is delighted with the righteousness thereof, (which thing undoubtedly cometh to pass, when it hateth the transgressing thereof,) therein it feeleth and acknowledgeth the goodness of the law, so that we are sufficiently convicted, yea, even by experience, that no evil is to be imputed to the law; yea, it would be wholesome unto men, if it happened upon right and pure hearts. And here we are not to take consent for such as we hear to be in the wicked, whose words are, "I see better things, and I allow of them, I follow after worse." *Item*, "I will follow those things which are hurtful, and flee those things I think my profit;" for they do it by compulsion, because they subscribe to the righteousness of God, from the which otherwise their will is altogether adversant; but the godly consenteth in deed, and with a most cheerful desire of heart; for that he coveteth nothing more than to mount up into heaven.

What kind of consent to the law of God there is in the godly and godless.

17. *Now, it is no more I that worketh it.* This is not the speech of one excusing himself, as though he were without fault; as many triflers think they have a good defence, whereby they may cover their sins, while they cast them upon the flesh; but it is a declaration how far he dissenteth from his flesh in his spiritual affection. For the faithful are carried with such fervency of spirit to obey God, that they deny their flesh.

Furthermore, this place proveth, that Paul disputeth not here of any other than of the godly which be already regenerate; for so long as man abideth like himself, whatsoever

Digitized by Google

he be, he is worthily counted corrupt; but Paul here denieth himself to be altogether possessed of sin, yea, he exempteth himself from the bondage thereof; as if he said, that sin remaineth only in some part of his soul, seeing he doth earnestly, from his heart, labour and strive unto the righteousness of God, and in deed declareth himself to bear the law of God graven within him.

18. *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing. For truly to will is present with me; but I find no means to perform that is good.*
19. *For the good that I would, that do I not; but the evil that I would not, that I do.*
20. *And if I do that I would not, now then I do it not, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

18. *For I know.* He saith, that there dwelleth no good thing in him, in respect of nature; therefore, it is as much as if it were said, *in me, so far forth as of myself.* For even by the first words, he condemneth himself wholly of corruption, when he confesseth there dwelleth no good thing in him; then, in the second place, he addeth a correction, lest he should be contumelious against the grace of God, which did also dwell in him, but was no part of the flesh. And here, again, he confirmeth that he speaketh not of every man, but only of the faithful man, who, through the relics of the flesh and grace of the Spirit, is divided in himself.

For to what purpose were this correction, except some part were free from fault, and therefore not carnal? Under the name of flesh he always comprehendeth all the gifts of man's nature, and also whatsoever is in man, beside the sanctification of the Spirit; as under the same spirit, which he is wont to oppose against the flesh, he signifieth that part of the soul, which being purged from corruption, the Spirit of God hath so fashioned it, that the image of God doth appear in it.

Both these names, therefore, as well of the flesh as the spirit, agree unto the soul; but the one unto that part of the soul which is regenerate, the other unto that which retaineth still his [its] natural affection.

The word flesh agreeth unto the soul.

Digitized by Google

To will is present with me. His meaning is not, that he had nothing but an ineffectual desire; but he denieth that the efficacy of the work answered his will, because the flesh hindered him, that he could not exactly do that he did. And so also understand that which followeth, namely, *to do that evil he would not;* because the flesh of the godly doth not only let them, that they cannot run speedily, but also putteth many impediments in their way, whereat they stumble. They *do* it not, therefore, because they perform it not with such alacrity as were meet. Wherefore, this *will* he speaketh of is the readiness of faith, while the Holy Spirit doth so frame the godly, that they are ready, and study to give their members to obey the Lord. And because their strength is not sufficient, Paul saith, he found not that [which] were to be wished; namely, the effect of a good desire.

We are said not to do that which we do not as we should.

Hereunto appertaineth the confession that next followeth; namely, that he did not the good he would, but rather the evil which he would not; namely, because the faithful, howsoever they be right-minded, yet, being privy to their own infirmity, they esteem no work to proceed from them without fault. For seeing Paul intreateth not here of a few faults of the godly, but in general noteth the whole course of their life, we gather that their best works are always stained with some blot of sin; so that no reward is to be hoped for, but so far forth as God doth pardon them.

Finally, he repeateth that sentence, namely, that so far forth as he is endued with celestial light, he is a faithful witness and subscriber to the righteousness of the law. Whereby it followeth, that if we had the pure integrity of nature, the law should not be deadly unto us; for the law is not adversant to that man, who, being of a sound mind, abhorreth from sin. Howbeit, health is of the celestial Physician.

21. *I find then by the law,* [*a law,*] *that when I would do good, evil is present with me.*
22. *For I consent to the law of God, concerning the inner man.*
23. *But I see another law in my members, rebelling against the law of my mind, and leading me captive unto the law of sin, which is in my members.*

Digitized by Google

21. *I find then.* Here Paul imagineth a fourfold law: namely, 1. The law of God, which only is properly so called, because it is the rule of righteousness, whereby our life is fashioned aright. 2. Hereunto he addeth the law of the mind, so terming the readiness of a faithful mind to obey the law of the Lord; because it is a certain conforming of us to the law of God. 3. On the contrary side, he opposeth the law of unrighteousness, and, by a certain allusion, he so calleth the dominion which iniquity hath, as well in a man not yet regenerate, as in the flesh of a regenerate man. For the laws of tyrants, how wicked soever they be, yet abusively are called laws. 4. Unto this law of sin, he maketh the law of members answer; that is, the concupiscence resting in our members, for [on account of] that consent [which] it hath with iniquity. Concerning the first member, because many interpreters take the name *law* in his [its] proper sense, they understand[1] κατα, or δια; and so doth Erasmus translate it, *by the law.* As though Paul had said, by the instruction and direction of the law he found out that corruption was grafted in him. But that thou mayest understand (or add) nothing,[2] the sentence shall run well thus, The faithful, while they go about to do good, (they) find a certain tyrannical law in themselves; because there is grafted in their marrow and bones a corruption contrary, and rebelling [against] the law of God. A fourfold law.

22. *For I consent to the law of God.* Here then thou seest what manner of division there is in godly minds, whence ariseth that battle of the flesh and the Spirit, which Augustine, in a certain place, doth notably call the Christian warfare.[3]

The law of God calleth man unto the rule of righteousness; iniquity, which is (as it were) a tyrannical law of Satan, pricketh forward unto wickedness. The Spirit carrieth unto the obedience of the law of God; the flesh draweth back unto the contrary part.[4] Man, thus distracted with divers desires, is now in a manner divided, (and of one made

[1] "Subaudiunt," supply. [2] "Ut nihil subaudias," without supplying any thing. [3] "Luctam Christianam," the Christian struggle. [4] "In contrariam partem," in an opposite direction.

Digitized by Google

two men;) but because the Spirit ought to hold the principality, he judgeth and estimateth himself chiefly by that part. Therefore, Paul saith, he was bound captive of his flesh; because, whereas he is yet tickled and moved with evil concupiscences, that is, a coaction, (compulsion,) in respect of the spiritual desire which altogether resisteth. But the acception[1] of the *inner man* and *members* is diligently to be noted, which, while many did mistake, they have fallen upon this rock. Therefore, the *inner man* is not simply taken for the soul, but for that spiritual part of the soul which is regenerate of God; the word *members* signifieth the other part that remaineth. For, as the soul is the more excellent part of man, and the body the inferior, so is the Spirit more excellent than the flesh. By this reason, therefore, because the Spirit occupieth the place of soul in man, and the flesh (that is, the corrupt and contaminated soul) the place of body, Spirit hath the name of inner man, and flesh the name of members.

What is meant by members, and how the Spirit hath the name of inner man.

The *outward* man is taken in another sense, in the Second to the Corinthians. But the circumstance of the present place necessarily requireth that interpretation [which] I have put down, and it is called *inner*, by the way of excellency, because it possesseth the heart and hidden affections, seeing the appetites of the flesh are wandering, and as it were out of man. Or, surely, it is like as if a man should compare heaven with earth. For Paul, by the way of contempt, under the name of *members*, noteth whatsoever appeareth in man, that he might the better declare how the secret renovation is hidden, and covered from our senses, save so far forth as it is apprehended by faith.

Now, then, seeing the law of the mind, without question, signifieth an affection rightly composed and set in order, it appeareth that this place is wickedly wrested unto[2] men not regenerate. For Paul teacheth that such are without mind, because their mind or soul degenerateth from reason.

[1] "Acceptio," meaning.

[2] "Perperam torquere," is improperly wrested to mean.

Digitized by Google

24. *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?*
25. *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Then I myself in my mind serve the law of God, but in my flesh the law of sin.*

24. *O wretched man.* He windeth up the disputation with a vehement exclamation, whereby he teacheth that we are not only to strive with our flesh, but with continual sighing to bewail both with ourselves and before God our unhappiness. And he demandeth not by whom he might be delivered, as though he doubted, as unbelievers do, who hold not that there is one only deliverer. But it is the voice of one panting, and almost fainting, because he doth not sufficiently see present help. And therefore hath he used the word (*take*, or) *deliver*, that he might show how there is required unto this deliverance a special power of God.

What is meant by the body of death.

By the body of death. He meaneth the mass of sin, or heap whereof man is compacted; saving that in him there remained only certain relics, with whose bonds he was holden captive. The pronoun τουτου, *this*, or, *of this*, which I, with Erasmus, have referred unto body, may also fitly be applied unto death, but almost in the same sense; because the mind of Paul is to show, that the eyes of the sons of God are opened, that they might prudently discern from the law of God[1] the corruption of their nature, and death which proceedeth thence. Howbeit the name body is all one with the name *external man* and *members;* for Paul noteth this to be the original of sin, that man is fallen from the law of his creation, and so is become carnal and earthly. For although he do yet excel brute beasts, yet his true dignity is taken from him, and that which remaineth is filled with innumerable corruptions; so that his soul, as it is degenerate, may be said to be changed into a body. So God saith with Moses, "My Spirit shall strive no more with man, because he is but flesh;" where, by way of reproach, he compareth man, being spoiled of his spiritual dignity, unto brute

Gen. vi. 3.

[1] "A lege Dei discernant," distinguish between the law of God and man.

Digitized by Google

beasts. And this place of Paul serveth notably to beat down all the glory of flesh. For it teacheth, that the most perfect men of all, so long as they dwell in their flesh, are addicted unto misery, because they are subject unto death; yea, whilst they do diligently examine themselves, they find nothing in their nature but misery.

Furthermore, lest they should cocker their dulness by his example, Paul provoketh them unto careful mournings,[1] and commandeth them, so long as they wander in earth, to desire death as the only remedy of their evil. And this is the right end of coveting or desiring death. For oftentimes desperation driveth profane men unto the same desire; but rather for the loathsomeness of this present life, than for the weariness of their sin, they do wickedly wish for death. Add, also, that the faithful, albeit they level at the true mark, yet they are not carried with an unbridled (or outrageous) passion to wish for death, but submit themselves to the will of God, to whom we ought to live and die. Wherefore they do not rage with indignation against God, but they do humbly lay their griefs in his bosom; for they do not so stay or rest in the cogitations of their miseries, but being mindful of the grace received, they temper their sorrow with mirth, as it followeth,

Why and how the godly may wish for death.

25. *I thank God.* He therefore addeth this thanksgiving straightway, lest any should think he murmured stubbornly against God in his complaint. For we know how easy it is, yea, even in just dolour or sorrow, to fall unto murmuring or impatiency. Notwithstanding, therefore, Paul bewailing his estate, did fervently covet death;[2] yet he confesseth himself to rest in the grace of God. For it is not meet that the saints, whilst they examine their own imperfections, should forget what they have received of God. Finally, this cogitation sufficeth to bridle impatience, and to nourish peace, namely, that they are received into the custody of God, to the end they should never perish; and even now feel themselves endued with the first fruits of the

[1] "Ad anxios gemitus eos Paulus extimulat," Paul stimulates them to anxious groanings. [2] "Ad exitum suspirat," sighs for his departure.

Digitized by Google

Spirit, which assureth them of the eternal inheritance. And albeit they do not yet enjoy the promised glory of heaven, yet they, being content with that measure which they have obtained, never want matter of joy.

Then I myself. A brief conclusion, wherein he teacheth that the faithful never come unto the mark[1] of righteousness so long as they dwell in their flesh; but they are in the way[2] until they have put off the body. By *mind*, he understandeth not that reasonable part of the soul, which the philosophers make so much on, but which is illuminated with the Spirit of God to understand and will aright. For there is not only mention made of the understanding, but also the serious desire of the heart is joined. To conclude, by this exception he confesseth that he is in such sort addicted unto God, that yet creeping upon the earth he is defiled with many corruptions. This is a notable place to convince[3] that pernicious doctrine of the Catharites (or *Novatians*) heretics, which some tumultuous spirits go about to renew again at this day.

We never come unto the mark of righteousness so long as we live in the flesh.

These professed themselves to be pure.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Now, then, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*
2. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*
3. *For that which was impossible to the law, because it was weak through the flesh, God, by sending his Son in the similitude of sinful flesh, yea, he hath condemned sin of sin in the flesh:*
4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

1. *Now, then, there is no, &c.* Having set down that conflict

[1] "Metam pertingere," reach the goal. [2] "In cursu esse," are in the race. [3] "Ad convincendum," to condemn.

Digitized by Google

which the godly have with their flesh, he returneth unto a very necessary consolation for them, whereof he made mention before; namely, that although they are [as] yet beset on every side with sin, nevertheless they are exempted from the power of death and from all curse; so be it they walk not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. For he joineth three things together: imperfection, which is always in the faithful; the mercy of God in pardoning and forgiving the same; regeneration of [by] the Spirit; and this last, verily, is added, lest any, upon a vain opinion, should boast himself, as though he were freed from the curse, while, in the meantime, he doth securely cocker his flesh. As the carnal man, therefore, doth in vain flatter himself, if he, being reckless to reform his life, under the pretence of this grace promise to himself impunity; so the trembling consciences of the godly have an invincible safeguard, that while they abide in Christ they know they are without all danger of condemnation. Now, it behoveth us to examine the words. He counteth those to *walk according to the Spirit*, not which have altogether put off all the senses of flesh, so that in their whole life there appeareth nothing besides a celestial perfection; but which do so diligently labour in taming[1] the flesh, that the study of piety may appear to reign in them. He denieth such to walk according to the flesh, because, wheresoever the sincere fear of God flourisheth, it taketh the dominion away from the flesh, albeit it doth not abolish all the corruptions thereof.

Who walk according to the Spirit.

2. *For the law of the Spirit of life.* This is a confirmation of the former sentence; for the understanding whereof the signification of the words is to be observed. He calleth the law of the Spirit improperly the Spirit of God, which sprinkleth our souls with the blood of Christ, not only that it might cleanse them from the blot of sin, in respect of guiltiness, but also sanctify them unto true purity. He addeth, that it quickeneth, (for the genitive case, after the manner of the Hebrews, is taken for an epitheton;) whereupon it followeth, that whoso detaineth a man in the letter

What is meant by the law of the Spirit.

[1] "Mortificanda," mortifying, omitted.

Digitized by Google

of the law, maketh him subject unto death. On the contrary, he calleth the law of sin and death the dominion of the flesh, and tyranny of death which proceedeth thence. The law of God is, as it were, placed in the midst; which law teacheth righteousness, but giveth it not; yea, rather it bindeth us in stronger bonds unto the servitude of sin and death. Therefore, the meaning is, Whereas the law of God condemneth men, that cometh to pass because, so long as they abide under the bond of the law, they are pressed with the bondage of sin; and so are guilty of death. But the Spirit of Christ, while, by correcting the inordinate lusts of the flesh, he abolisheth the law of sin in us, doth also deliver us from the guiltiness of death. If any should object, that then the forgiveness whereby our offences are buried doth depend upon regeneration, the answer is easy; namely, that the cause is not here set down of Paul, but the manner only is delivered, whereby we are loosed from guiltiness. And Paul denieth us to obtain that by the doctrine of the law; but while we are renewed by the Spirit of God, we are also justified by a free forgiveness, that the curse of sin might no more lie upon us. This sentence, therefore, is as much as if Paul had said, The grace of regeneration is never separated from the imputation of righteousness. I dare not take the *law of sin and death*, with some, for the [law] of God, because it seemeth to be a hard speech; for, although by increasing sin it beget death, yet Paul did purposely, above, withdraw from this despite, (or roughness of speech.[1]) Although nothing the more I consent to their opinion, who understand the law of sin for the concupiscence of the flesh, as though Paul said, he had conquered it; for, shortly after, it shall (as I hope) sufficiently appear that he speaketh of free forgiveness, which doth bring unto us a perfect peace with God. I had rather keep the name of *law*, than, with Erasmus, to translate it *right or power;* because Paul did not without cause allude unto the law of God.

What is meant by the law of sin.

Objection.

Answer.

3. *For that which was impossible to the law.* Now followeth

[1] "Paulus tamen ab hac invidia consulto supra deflexit," yet Paul above purposely declined to use this invidious expression.

Digitized by Google

the polishing and setting forth of the confirmation, namely, that the Lord hath, by his free mercy, justified us in Christ; which thing was impossible for the law. But because this is a very notable sentence, let us examine every part thereof. That he intreateth here of free justification, or of remission, whereby God reconcileth us to himself, it may be gathered by that last clause, where he addeth, *who walk according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh.* For if Paul went about to teach how, by the Spirit of regeneration, we are instructed or furnished to conquer sin, to what end were this addition? But it was very expedient that, after he had promised free remission unto the faithful, then this doctrine should be restrained unto those who join repentance unto faith, and abuse not the mercy of God unto the licentiousness of the flesh. Secondly, here is to be noted the rendering of the cause;[1] for the apostle showeth how the grace of Christ doth absolve us from guiltiness.

The doctrine of remission and free mercy is restrained unto those who join repentance unto faith.

Now, concerning the words, *impossible* [τὸ ἀδύνατον] *to the law*, out of question is taken for a defect or impotency; as though it were said, there was a remedy found of God, whereby the impossibility of the law was taken away. As for the particle ἐν ᾧ, which Erasmus hath turned, *that part wherein*, because I think it to be causal, I choose rather to translate it *because*. And albeit, perhaps, you shall not find such a phrase of speech with good authors of the Greek tongue, yet, because the apostles do everywhere use Hebrew phrases, this interpretation ought not to seem hard. Certainly the sound readers will grant, that the cause of defect was expressed here, as we shall declare again a little after. Now, while Erasmus putteth down of himself the principal verb,[2] in my judgment the text doth run very well otherwise. The conjunction καὶ, *and*, hath deceived Erasmus, that he should insert (or thrust in) the verb *præstitit;* that is, *he hath performed.* But I think it was put for amplification's sake, except any, perhaps, like the conjecture of the Greek glosser[3] better, who joineth this member, *and of sin*, to that [which] goeth before; namely, *God sent his Son in the similitude of*

[1] "Illustratio probationis," illustration of the proof. [2] "Principale verbum suppleat," supplies the principal word. [3] "Scholiastæ," scholiast.

Digitized by Google

sinful flesh, and for sin. Howbeit, I have followed that which I have thought to be the natural sense of Paul. Now I come unto the thing itself. Paul affirmeth plainly that our sins were, therefore, done away by the death of Christ; because it was impossible for the law to make us righteous. Whereupon it followeth, there is more commanded in the law than we are able to perform; because, if we were able to perform the law, it were in vain to seek for remedy elsewhere. Wherefore it is absurd that man's strength should be measured by the precepts of the law, as though God, in requiring that [which] is just, had regarded what and how great our strength were.

Because it was weak. Lest any should think the law were charged irreverently with weakness, or should restrain this unto ceremonies,[1] Paul hath precisely expressed that that defect is not through the fault of the law, but through the corruption of our flesh. For we must confess, if any did absolutely satisfy the law of God, he were righteous before God. So, then, he denieth not the law to be able to justify us in respect of doctrine, as [to] which [it] containeth the perfect rule of righteousness; but because our flesh doth not compass that righteousness, the whole strength of the law falleth or vanisheth away. So their error, or rather dotage, is refuted, who think the power of justifying is taken away only from ceremonies; when Paul, plainly putting the fault in us, declareth that he doth find no fault in the doctrine. Why the law cannot justify.

Furthermore, understand the *infirmity* (or weakness) of the law, as the apostle is wont to use the word ασθενειας, not only for a little weakness, but for impotency, that he might signify how the law hath no force at all to justify. Thou seest, then, we are utterly excluded from the righteousness of works, and, therefore, must flee unto the righteousness of Christ, because there can be none in ourselves. Which thing is chiefly necessary to be known; for we shall never be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, except first we know assuredly that we have no righteousness of our own. The name *flesh* is put always in the same signification,

[1] "Vel hoc restringeret ad ceremonias," or should restrict it to ceremonies.

Digitized by Google

namely, for ourselves. Therefore, the corruption of our nature maketh the law of God unprofitable to us; because, whilst it showeth the way of life, it doth not reduce us back who are running headlong unto death.

How God hath restored us to righteousness by his Son.

God, by sending his Son. Now, he showeth the manner how the celestial Father hath restored us to righteousness by his Son; namely, because he hath condemned sin in the flesh of Christ; that is, the handwriting being, as it were, cancelled, he hath done away the guiltiness, which did hold us bound before the Lord. For the condemnation of sin hath brought us into righteousness, because the guiltiness being put away we are absolved, that God might repute us just. But first he saith, that Christ was sent that he might admonish us how righteousness is not resident in us, seeing it is to be sought for in another;[1] and in vain do men trust to their merits, who are not otherwise justified than by prayer[2] (or entreaty;) or else because they borrow righteousness of that satisfaction which Christ fulfilled in his flesh. And he saith that Christ came *in the similitude of sinful flesh*, because, albeit the flesh of Christ was stained with no blots, yet to the sight it seemed sinful, so far forth as he sustained that punishment [which] was due to our sins. And certainly upon the same flesh, as subject unto him, death did show all the parts of his power. And because it behoved our High Priest, by his own experience, to learn what it is to succour the weak, Christ would undertake our infirmities, that he might be the readier unto mutual passion;[3] in which part, also, there appeared a certain image of sinful nature.

Yea, of sin. I have said a while ago, that this was expounded, by some, of the cause or end why God did send his Son; namely, that he might make satisfaction for sin. Chrysostom, and divers after him, understand it somewhat more hardly;[4] namely, that sin was condemned of sin, because it slew Christ unjustly and unworthily. Indeed, I confess, because he, being just and innocent, undertook

[1] "Ab illo," from him. [2] "Precario," at pleasure. [3] "Ad sympathiam propensior," more disposed to sympathy, (to have a fellow-feeling with us.) [4] "Durius," more harshly.

Digitized by Google

punishment for sinners, by this means was the price of redemption paid; yet I cannot be brought to think the word *sin* to be put here in any other sense than for a sacrifice of satisfaction,[1] which, of the Hebrews, is called אשם [*asham,*] as the Grecians call καθαρμα, a sacrifice, whereunto malediction or curse is annexed. So the same Paul saith, "Christ, who knew not sin, became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And the preposition περι, *of*, or *for*, is taken here causally; as though Paul had said, *upon that sacrifice*, or else, for the burden of sin which was laid upon Christ, sin was cast down from his power, that now it might not have us in subjection. For he saith, that sin was condemned metaphorically, as they who (are cast in a matter and) lose their process; because God dealeth no more against those guilty persons who are cleared by the sacrifice of Christ. If we say the kingdom of sin, wherewithal we were oppressed, was abrogated, it is all one. Therefore, Christ took unto him that [which] was ours, that he might pour upon us that [which] was his. For having taken upon him our curse, he hath indued us with his blessing. Here Paul addeth *in the flesh*, that our confidence might be more sure, whilst we see sin was conquered and abolished even in our own nature; for so it cometh to pass, that our nature is truly made partaker of that victory; which thing he also declareth straightway.

Sin taken for the sacrifice of sin.

2 Cor. v. 21.

4. *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled.* They who gather out of this place that those [who] are renewed by the Spirit of Christ do fulfil the law, they bring in a feigned matter,[2] altogether wide from the meaning of Paul. For the faithful, so long as they wander in this world, never come unto that perfection, that the righteousness of the law should be full and perfect in them. Therefore, this must needs be referred unto grace;[3] because, whilst the obedience of Christ is imputed to us, the law is satisfied, that we might be accounted for just. For the perfection which the law re-

[1] "Expiatrice victima," an expiatory victim. [2] "Commentum," a fiction. [3] "Ergo, hoc ad veniam referre necesse est," it must, therefore, refer to pardon.

Digitized by Google

quired was therefore exhibited in the flesh, that the rigour thereof should no more be of force to condemn us; but because Christ doth communicate his righteousness to none but [those] whom he hath coupled to himself by the bond of his Spirit, regeneration is added again, lest Christ should be thought to be the minister of sin; as many are ready to draw unto the lasciviousness of the flesh whatsoever is said of the fatherly mercy of God; and some do wickedly slander this doctrine, as though it extinguished the study of a right life.

Righteousness, by faith in Christ, is coupled with sanctification.

5. *For they who are after the flesh, study (or cogitate) those things which are of the flesh; and they which are after the Spirit, the things which are of the Spirit.*
6. *The (wisdom or) cogitation, verily, of the flesh is death; but the (wisdom or) cogitation of the Spirit is life and peace.*
7. *Seeing the (wisdom or) cogitation of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be.*
8. *They, therefore, which are in the flesh cannot please God.*

5. *For they who are after the flesh.* He bringeth in this difference of the flesh and the Spirit, not only by an argument taken from the contrary, to prove that [which] he said before; namely, that the grace of Christ doth not appertain unto any but those who, being renewed by the Spirit, do give themselves unto innocence; but also, that with due consolation he might cheer up the faithful, lest, whilst they are privy in themselves unto many infirmities, they should despair. For seeing none are delivered from the curse but they who lead a spiritual life, it might seem that hope of salvation were cut off from all men. For what man shall be found in the world furnished with an angelical purity, so that he hath nothing to do with the flesh? It was necessary to add this definition, what it is *to be in the flesh*, and *to walk according to the flesh*. At the first Paul doth not distinguish so precisely; but yet (as we shall see in the process[1]) his purpose is to put the faithful in good hope, albeit they are

[1] "In progressu," as we proceed.

Digitized by Google

yet tied to their flesh, so be that they loose not the reins to the lusts thereof, but suffer themselves to be ruled by the Holy Spirit. When he saith, that the *carnal* do care for (or meditate) the *things of the flesh;* he testifieth, that he counteth not those for carnal who aspire unto heavenly righteousness, but who are altogether addicted to the world. Who are carnal.

Therefore, I have put down the word *cogitate*, which comprehendeth more, instead of τοῦ φρονεῖν, *to be wise*, or *understand*, that the reader might know that they[1] are excluded from the sons of God, who, being given to the enticements of the flesh, apply their minds and studies to wicked lusts. Now, in the second member, he exhorteth the faithful to hope well, if they feel themselves to be lifted up by the Spirit unto the meditation of righteousness. For wheresoever the Spirit reigneth it is a sign of the grace of God bringing salvation;[2] seeing that the grace of God hath no place there where, the Spirit being extinguished, the kingdom of the flesh flourisheth. But here I do briefly make mention of that whereof I admonished before; namely, *in the flesh*, or *after the flesh*, is as much as to be void of the gift of regeneration. And such are all they who abide (as the common speech is) mere natural men.

6. *The (wisdom or) cogitation, verily, of the flesh.* Erasmus hath put *affection*, the old interpreter *wisdom*. But seeing it is sure that the word τὸ φρονημα is that with Paul, which Moses calleth the imagination of the heart, and in this word all the senses [faculties] of the soul, from reason and understanding unto the very affections, are comprehended, the name *cogitation* seemeth unto me to serve better. And although Paul hath used the particle causal γαρ, *for*, yet I doubt not but he doth simply confirm. For here is a kind of concession (or granting;) because, after that he had briefly defined what it is to be in the flesh, now he addeth what end remaineth for all those [who] are given to the flesh. And so, on the contrary, he showeth how they are not capable of the grace of Christ whosoever abide in the flesh, Gen. vi. 5. What end abideth for such as are still carnal.

[1] "Eos demum," those only. [2] "Salveficæ Dei gratiæ," of the saving grace of God.

Digitized by Google

who all their life long make haste and are carried unto death. And it is a notable place, whereby we may learn how, by the course of nature, we rush headlong into death; because we conceive nothing of ourselves but that which is deadly. And straightway he hath opposed the contrary member, that he might teach if any part of us tend unto life, then the Spirit showeth forth his virtue; because there cometh no spark of life from our flesh. He calleth the cogitation (or *wisdom*) of the Spirit *life*, because it quickeneth or leadeth unto life. And under the name of *peace*, after the manner of the Hebrews, he noteth all the parts of felicity. For whatsoever the Spirit of God worketh in us it appertaineth to our blessedness; yet it followeth not that any should therefore ascribe salvation unto works. For although God doth begin our salvation in us, and at the length doth accomplish it, by fashioning us to his likeness, yet the only cause is his good pleasure, whereby he maketh us partakers of Christ.

How the cogitation of the Spirit is called life.

7. *Seeing the cogitation (or wisdom) of the flesh.* Now, he addeth a confirmation of that [which] he put down before; namely, that nothing proceedeth from the studies of our flesh but death; because they fight fiercely with the will of God. And the will of God is the rule of righteousness; whereupon it followeth that that is unjust whatsoever disagreeth from the same; and if it be unjust, then is it also deadly.

Man's carnal will is, in all things, contrary to the will of God.

Now, then, God being against it, and offended, in vain doth any look for life. For after his wrath must needs forthwith follow death, which is the revengement of his wrath. And here let us observe, that the will of man is, in all things, contrary to the will of God. For, look, by how much crookedness differeth from straightness, so much must we needs differ from God.

For it is not subject to the law of God. An exposition of the former sentence; for it declareth how all the meditations of the flesh war against the will of God; because the will of God is not elsewhere to be sought for than where he hath revealed it. For in the law he showeth what doth please

Digitized by Google

him; they, therefore, that will rightly examine how rightly they agree with God, let them apply[1] all their counsels and studies unto this rule. For although nothing be done in the world but by the direction of the secret Providence of God; yet under pretence of this, to say that nothing is done but God doth allow of it, is intolerable blasphemy; whereabout certain phrensied persons cavil at this day. For to seek the difference of right and wrong, which the law hath distinctly and plainly set before our eyes in a deep labyrinth, what madness were it? Indeed, (as I said,) the Lord hath his secret counsel, whereby, at his pleasure, he disposeth all things; but because it is incomprehensible to us, let us know that we are restrained from too curious searching after it. In the meanwhile, let this abide firm, that nothing pleaseth him but righteousness; neither can right judgment be given of our works but by the law, wherein God hath unfeignedly testified both what doth please or displease him.

We must content ourselves with the revealed will of God.

Neither can it. Behold here the power of free-will, which sophisters cannot sufficiently advance! Undoubtedly, Paul doth here, in plain words, affirm that which they with full mouth do detest; namely, that it is impossible for us to subject our affections unto the obedience of the law. They boast that our heart is pliant unto both parts,[2] so it be helped by the instinct of the Spirit; and that in us there is a free election of good or evil; the Spirit doth only help, but it is ours to choose or refuse. They feign also good motions, whereby of our own accord we are prepared. Paul, on the contrary, saith our heart is full of hardness and untamed stubbornness, so that it is never moved naturally to undertake the yoke of God; and he disputeth not of one or two affections, but, speaking indefinitely, doth cast all those motions [which] arise out of us into this bundle. Let that ethnical philosophy, therefore, of free-will be far from a Christian mind. Let every man (as in truth he is) acknowledge himself to be the servant of sin, that being manumised by the grace of Christ he may be free; and it is altogether folly to glory in another liberty.

There is no free-will in the natural man.

[1] "Exigant," test. [2] "In utramque partem," in either direction.

Digitized by Google

8. *They, therefore, which are in the flesh.* It is not without cause that I have expounded the particle adversative δε, by the causal; for verily the apostle gathereth out of the premises,[1] that they who deliver over themselves to be led by the lusts of the flesh, are all of them abominable to God. And hitherto he hath confirmed that sentence; namely, that all they have nothing to do with Christ, which walk not after the Spirit, because they are void of an heavenly life.

Who have nothing to do with Christ.

9. *Now, ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you; for if any have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is not his.*

10. *And if Christ be in you, the body verily is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life for righteousness' sake.*

11. *If (I say) the Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he which raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because of his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

9. *Now, ye are not in the flesh.* By a supposition he applieth the general sentence unto them to whom he wrote; not only to the end that, directing his talk as proper unto them, he might the more vehemently move them; but also, that by the definition lately put down, they might certainly gather how they are of the number of those from whom Christ hath taken the curse of the law. Yet, withal showing of what force the Spirit of God is in the elect, and what fruit it bringeth forth, he exhorteth them unto newness of life.

If so be that the Spirit of God. This is a correction[2] very fitly applied, whereby they are stirred up to examine themselves more nearly, lest they pretend the name of Christ in vain. And this is a most sure note, whereby the sons of God are discerned from the children of the world, if by the Spirit of God they be regenerate unto innocency and holiness; although it seemeth his purpose was not so much to correct hypocrisy as to suggest matter of glorying against those [who] were preposterously zealous over the law, who

A note [mark] to know the true sons of God from the children of the world.

[1] "Ex prædictis," out of what was said before. [2] "Correctio," reservation.

Digitized by Google

esteemed more of the dead letter than of the inward virtue of the Spirit, which quickeneth the law. Furthermore, this place teacheth, that Paul, by the name of the Spirit, meant not the mind or understanding, (which of the patrons of free-will is called the more excellent part of the soul,) but the heavenly gift. For he expoundeth those to be spiritual, not which obey reason by their own motion, but whom God governeth by his Spirit. Neither yet are they said to be according to the Spirit, as though they were full of the Spirit of God, (which thing hath happened to none yet,) but because they have the Spirit of God abiding in them, howsoever they feel some relic of the flesh remaining in them. And it cannot (meaning the Spirit cannot) remain, except it have the superiority; for we are to note, that a man is named of the chiefest part in him.

Who and how they are called spiritual.

But if any have not the Spirit of Christ. He addeth this, that he might show how necessary the denial of the flesh is in Christians. The kingdom of the Spirit is the abolishing of the flesh; in whom the Spirit (of Christ) reigneth not, they do not appertain unto Christ. Then they are not Christians that serve the flesh; for they who pull Christ away from his Spirit, make him like unto a dead image or carcase. And always we are to remember that counsel of the apostle; namely, that free remission of sins cannot be separated from the Spirit of regeneration; because this were, as a man would say, to rend Christ in pieces. Which thing, if it be true, it is marvel that we are charged, by the adversaries of the gospel, with arrogancy, that we dare acknowledge the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us; for either we must deny Christ, or confess that we are Christians by his Spirit. Surely it is horrible to hear that men are so fallen from the word of the Lord, that they do not only boast themselves to be Christians without the Spirit of God; but also they scoff at the faith of others. But this is the philosophy of Papists.

Now, verily, let the readers mark here, that the Spirit is indifferently sometimes called the Spirit of God the Father, sometimes of Christ, not only because all the fulness thereof is shed upon Christ, as he is our Mediator and Head, that from thence might redound to every one of us his portion; but

How the Spirit of God is also called the Spirit of Christ.

Digitized by Google

also, because the same Spirit is common to the Father and the Son, who have one essence, and the same eternal Deity. Yet, because we have no communication with God but through Christ, the apostle very wisely descendeth from the Father (who seemeth to be further off) unto Christ.

10. *And if Christ be in you.* That which before he said of the Spirit, now he saith of Christ; whereby is declared the manner of Christ's dwelling in us; for as by his Spirit he consecrateth us for temples to himself, so by the same Spirit he dwelleth in us; and now he doth more clearly open that which we touched before, namely, that the sons of God are counted spiritual, not in respect of a full and absolute perfection, but only for the newness of life [which] is begun in them. And here is a preoccupation, whereby he preventeth that doubt which might otherwise vex us; for, howsoever the Spirit possesseth one part of us, yet we see another part to be held still of death. Therefore, he answereth, that in the Spirit of Christ there is a virtue of quickening, which is of power to swallow up our mortality. Whereupon he inferreth how we are patiently to expect till the relics of sin be utterly abolished. Furthermore, the readers have been already admonished, that by the word *Spirit* they understand not our soul, but the Spirit of regeneration; which Spirit Paul calleth life, not only because it liveth and flourisheth in us, but because by his strength it quickeneth us, until at the length, our mortal flesh being extinguished, it doth perfectly renew us; as, on the contrary, the word *body* signifieth that gross mass, which is not yet cleansed, by the Spirit of God, from the dregs of the earth, which savour of nothing but that [which] is gross; for otherwise to attribute unto the body the guiltiness of sin were absurd. Again, the soul is so far from being life, that it liveth not itself. Then, the meaning of Paul is, although sin doth judge us unto death, so far forth as there remaineth yet in us the corruption of the first nature, yet is the Spirit of God the conqueror. Neither doth this hinder any whit, namely, that we are only indued with the first fruits, because even one spark thereof is the seed of life.

How Christ dwelleth in us.

Digitized by Google

11. *If (I say) the Spirit.* This is a confirmation of the last sentence, being taken from the efficient cause after this manner: If by the power of the Spirit of God Christ was raised, and the Spirit keepeth his power for ever, then it shall also show forth the same power in us. And he taketh it for a thing granted; namely, that a proof of that power which appertaineth unto the body of the whole church[1] was declared in the person of Christ; and because he maketh God the author of the resurrection, he assigneth unto him the quickening Spirit.

Who raised. By a circumlocution he describeth God, which did agree better for the present purpose, than if [he] had simply named him. In like manner, he ascribeth the glory of Christ raised unto the Father; for that was more effectual to prove the thing he intended, than if he had attributed it unto Christ himself. For it might have been objected, Christ was able, by his own virtue, to raise up himself, which no man can do; but when he saith that God raised up Christ by his Spirit, which he hath also given unto you, nothing can be brought against it, seeing thereby he doth put us in sure hope of the resurrection. And for all this there is nothing derogated from that sentence of John; John x. 18. namely, "I have power to lay down my soul, and to take it up again." Surely Christ did rise of himself, and by his own power; but as he is wont to transfer unto the Father whatsoever heavenly virtue is in him, so the apostle (not improperly) hath translated that unto the Father, which was a most proper work[2] in Christ. Finally, by *mortal bodies* he understandeth whatsoever remaineth yet in us subject unto death; as his common custom is by this name to call the grosser part of us. Whence we gather that he speaketh not of the last resurrection, which shall be in a moment, but of that continual operation of the Spirit, whereby it mortifieth, by little and little, the relics of the flesh, and reneweth a celestial life in us.

Seeing Christ rose by his own power, how, then, is his resurrection ascribed to the Father?

[1] "In Christi persona editum fuisse virtutis specimen quæ ad totum Ecclesiæ corpus pertinet," that in the person of Christ was exhibited a specimen of the power which belongs to the whole body of the Church. [2] "Divinitatis," of divinity.

Digitized by Google

12. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, that we should live after the flesh.*
13. *For if you live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.*
14. *For whoso are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

12. *Therefore, brethren.* This is the conclusion of the premises; for if we be to renounce the flesh, then ought we [to] have nothing to do with it. Again, if the Spirit ought to reign in us, not to be at his beck were absurd. The speech of Paul here is imperfect, because he omitteth one member of the antithesis (or contrariety;) namely, that we are debtors unto the Spirit; howbeit the sense is clear enough. And this conclusion hath the force of an exhortation; as he is always wont to draw exhortation out of doctrine. So, in another place, he admonisheth us that we grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. And, again, *if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* And that cometh to pass while we renounce our carnal concupiscences, that we might (as it were) bind ourselves in service to the righteousness of God; for, verily, in this sort we ought to reason, and not as some blasphemous persons, who prate, saying, Let us be secure, because there is no power in us. But this is, as it were, to fight against God, if, through contempt and negligence, we extinguish his grace offered to us.

Eph. iv. 30.
Gal. v. 25.
When we may be said to live according to the Spirit.

13. *For if ye live after the flesh.* He addeth a (commination or) threatening, that he might the rather shake off from them all drowsiness; whereby, also, they are notably refuted, who brag of justification by faith without the Spirit of Christ; although, in their own conscience, they are sufficiently reproved, because there is no trust in God where there is not also a love of righteousness. Indeed, it is true, that we are justified by the sole mercy of God in Christ; but this also is as true and certain, that all they who are justified are called of the Lord, that they should live worthy

Digitized by Google

their calling. Let the faithful, therefore, learn to embrace Christ, not only unto righteousness, but also unto sanctification, as he was given unto us to both these ends, lest, through their lame faith, they rend him in pieces.

But if by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh. He so tempereth his speech, that he cause not the godly to despair, who feel yet in themselves many infirmities; for howsoever we be yet subject unto sin, nevertheless he promiseth life unto us, so that we study to mortify the flesh. Neither doth he require exactly the destruction of the flesh, but only chargeth us to study to tame the lusts thereof.

We must not kill our bodies, but subdue the lusts of them.

14. *For whoso are led by the Spirit of God.* This is a confirmation of that which went immediately before; for here he teacheth that they are accounted amongst the sons of God who are ruled by his Spirit, because by this mark God acknowledgeth them to be his. By this means the vain ostentation of hypocrites is done away, who usurp the title without the thing; and the faithful are encouraged unto most sure confidence of their salvation. The sum is, They are the sons of God whoso are led by the Spirit of God; but all the sons of God are heirs of eternal life; therefore, they ought to be sure of eternal life whoso are led by the Spirit of God. And the middle proposition or assumption (as they call it) is omitted, because it was out of all question.

Who are the sons of God.

Nevertheless, we are to note that there is a manifold leading of the Spirit; for there is an universal, whereby all the creatures are supported and moved; there are also peculiar in men, and the same are divers; but here he understandeth sanctification, wherewith God vouchsafeth none but his elect, whilst he doth separate them apart to himself for sons.

The leading of the Spirit is divers.

15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

16. *The same Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God.*

Digitized by Google

17. *If we be sons, we are also heirs, even the heirs of God, and heirs annexed with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him.*

18. *For I count the afflictions of this present time not to be comparable to the glory to come, which shall be revealed unto us.*

Now, he confirmeth that certainty of trust, (or confidence,) wherein of late he bid the faithful stay themselves, and that by an argument taken from an especial effect of the Spirit; because it is not, therefore, given us, that it might toss us with trembling, or press us with anxiety; but rather, that all perturbation being quenched, setting our minds in a quiet state, it might stir us unto assured and free invocation of God. So then he doth not only prosecute the argument he touched before, but also standeth[1] more in that other member which he had annexed; namely, of the fatherly mercy of God, whereby he forgiveth his the infirmity of the flesh, and those faults which yet remain in them. He teacheth that the confidence hereof is assured unto us by the Spirit of adoption, which would not bid us be bold in prayer except it assured us of free remission. And to the end he might the rather set out that matter, he setteth down a twofold spirit; one he calleth the spirit of bondage, which we may conceive by the law; the other of adoption, which is by the gospel. He saith, that[2] was given in old time unto fear; and this,[3] at this day, unto assurance. By such comparison of contraries, the certainty of our salvation is (as thou seest) made more manifest. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, when he saith, We are not come unto the mount Sinai, where all things were so terrible, that the people, being overthrown[4] (as it were) with the present sentence of death, did pray they might not be spoken unto; yea, Moses himself confessed he was afraid; but we are come unto Sion, the hill of the Lord, and his city the celestial Jerusalem, where is the Mediator of the New Testament, Jesus.

To what end the Spirit of God is given us.

A twofold spirit.

Heb. xii. 18.

By the adverb, *again*, we gather that the law is here com-

[1] "Insistit," insists, or dwells more. [2] "Illum," the former.
[3] "Hunc," the latter. [4] "Consternatus," terrified.

Digitized by Google

pared with the gospel; because the Son of God, by his coming, brought unto us this inestimable benefit, that the servile condition of the law should no more bind us. Yet thou mayest not gather hereby, either that none had the Spirit of adoption before the coming of Christ, or that whoso received the law were servants and not sons. For he doth rather compare the ministry of the law with the dispensation of the gospel, than persons with persons. Indeed, I confess that the faithful are admonished here, how much more liberally God hath now dealt with them than he did in old time with the fathers under the Old Testament; yet he respecteth the external dispensation, in respect whereof only we excel; because, howsoever the faith of Abraham, Moses, and David, was more excellent than ours; yet, forasmuch as God in a manner kept them under a schoolmistress, they were not yet come unto that liberty which is opened unto us.

And also it is to be noted, that I have purposely (because of false apostles) put an antithesis (or contrariety) between the literal disciples of the law and the faithful, whom Christ, the heavenly Master, doth not only speak unto with sound of mouth, but also inwardly doth teach effectually by his Spirit. And although the covenant of grace is contained in the law, yet he removeth it thence; because, opposing the gospel, he considereth nothing but that which was proper to the law, namely, to bid and forbid, and, by the denouncing of death, to bridle sinners; and so he giveth unto the law that quality whereby it differeth from the gospel. Or, if any had rather, he propoundeth the bare law, as God therein covenanteth with us in respect of works. Thus, therefore, we are to think of the persons amongst the people of the Jews, when the law was published, and also after it was [had been] published, the godly were illuminated with the same Spirit of faith; and, therefore, the hope of eternal inheritance (whereof the Spirit is a pledge and seal) was sealed in their heart. Here only is the difference, that the Spirit is poured out more abundantly and plentifully in the kingdom of Christ. But if thou hast regard unto the dispensation of doctrine, salvation shall seem to have been then for a surety

What was proper to the law.

Digitized by Google

first manifested when Christ was exhibited in the flesh; with such obscurity were all things covered under the Old Testament, in comparison of that light [which] is under the gospel.

Furthermore, if the law be considered in itself, it can do nothing but bind men, that are subject to miserable servitude, with the horror of death; because it promiseth no good thing, but with [under] condition; and it denounceth death against all transgressors. Wherefore, as under the law, there was the spirit of bondage, which pressed the conscience with fear; so, under the gospel, there is the Spirit of adoption, which cheereth our souls with the testimony of our salvation. And observe, that *fear* is joined to *bondage*, because it cannot otherwise be but the law should, with wonderful disquietness, vex and torment our souls, so long as it exerciseth his power. Wherefore, there is no other remedy for the quieting of them, than whilst God, forgiving our offences, doth favour[1] us as a father his children.

How fear is joined with bondage.

By whom we cry, Abba. He hath, therefore, changed the person, that he might express the state[2] of all the godly; as though he said, Ye have received the Spirit, whereby you, as well as we and the residue of all the faithful, do cry. And the figure mimesis (here used of the apostle) is very significant; for in the person of the faithful, he pronounceth the name of Father. The doubling of the name by divers words containeth an amplification.

Mimesis, which is, when one taketh on him the person of another.

For Paul now giveth to understand, that the mercy of God is now so published through the whole world, that he is indifferently prayed unto in all tongues, as Augustine noteth. Therefore, his meaning was to express the consent amongst all nations. Whereupon it followeth that now there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, seeing they are knit together amongst themselves. The prophet Esay speaketh otherwise, saying, That the tongue of Canaan should be common unto all; yet all one sense, because he respecteth not the external form of speech, but the consent of heart in worshipping God, and the same and simple study in profess-

Isa. xix. 18.

[1] "Indulget," indulges. [2] "Sortem communem," the common lot.

Digitized by Google

ing his true and pure worship. The word *cry* is put to express the constancy;[1] as if he said, we pray not doubtingly, but boldly we lift up our voice[2] unto heaven. What is meant by crying unto God.

Indeed, the faithful under the law did call God Father, but not with such sure confidence, seeing the vail did drive them far from the sanctuary; but now, when an entrance is opened unto us by the blood of Christ, we may familiarly, and as it were with full mouth, glory that we are the sons of God, from whence this cry proceedeth. Finally, by this the prophecy of Osee is fulfilled, "I will say unto them, You are my people; and they shall answer again, Thou art my God." Hosea ii. 23. For the more clear the promise is, so much more boldness[3] is there in prayer.

16. *For the Spirit.* He doth not simply say, the Spirit of God is a witness to our spirit; but he useth a compound verb, which may be translated, *to witness together*, if *contestation* were not somewhat else with the Latins.[4] But Paul meaneth, that the Spirit of God doth give unto us such testimony, that by the direction and governance thereof our spirit is assured the adoption of God is firm. For our mind of itself, except the testimony of the Spirit went before, could not bring unto us this confidence. Moreover, here is an exposition of the former sentence. For whilst the Spirit testifieth that we are the sons of God, it doth withal put this boldness in our hearts that we dare call God our Father. And surely, seeing it is the confidence of heart only that openeth our mouth, except the Spirit gave testimony to our hearts of the fatherly love of God, our tongues would be dumb to utter any prayers. For that principle is always to be held, God is not otherwise rightly prayed unto, unless, as in mouth we call him Father, so we be surely persuaded in our hearts that he is such an one. When God is rightly prayed unto.

Whereunto the other also answereth, namely, that our faith is not otherwise proved than by the invocation of God.

[1] "Fiduciam," confidence or trust. [2] "Claram vocem," a clear voice. [3] "Libertas," freedom. [4] "Quod vertere liceret 'contestatur' nisi aliud Latinis esset contestatio," which might be translated into Latin by "contestatur," (he witnesseth together,) were it not that the Latin word "contestatio" is used in a different sense.

Digitized by Google

And, therefore, not without cause Paul, calling us unto this proof,[1] showeth, that then it appeareth how seriously every one believeth, when they who have embraced the promise of grace exercise themselves in prayers. And here those toys of sophisters, touching moral conjecture, are notably refuted; which is nothing else but uncertainty and doubtfulness[2] of mind, yea, rather wandering and error.[3] And also their objection is answered, where they demand how a man may be assured of the will of God. But this certainty proceedeth not from man's brain,[4] but is the testimony of the Spirit of God, as he handleth more at large in his former Epistle to the Corinthians, whence also the fuller exposition of this place is to be gathered. Therefore, this sentence standeth sure, That none can be called the son of God who doth not acknowledge himself to be such [an] one; which knowledge is called science of John, to show forth the certainty thereof.

Whence the certainty of salvation proceedeth.

1 John v. 19.

17. *If we be children.* By an argument taken from that [which] is annexed, or from the consequent, he proveth that salvation standeth herein, if we have God for our Father. The inheritance is ordained for the sons; seeing, then, God hath adopted us to himself for sons, he hath also ordained the inheritance for us. Secondly, he showeth[6] what kind of inheritance that is, namely, celestial, and therefore incorruptible and eternal, such as was manifested in Christ. By which manifestation both all uncertainty is taken away, and also the excellency of the inheritance is commended, which we participate with the only begotten Son of God; albeit the purpose of Paul is (as shortly after it shall better appear) highly to advance the inheritance promised unto us, that we, contenting ourselves with it, might manfully despise the allurements of the world, and patiently bear whatsoever troubles happen unto us in the world.

If so be that we suffer with him. There are divers inter-

[1] "Examen," test. [2] "Anxietas," anxiety. [3] "Vacillatio et hallucinatio," vacillation and delusion. [4] "Humani captus," within the reach or capacity of man. [5] "Ο' ἴδαμεν," we know, knowledge. [6] "Subindicat," intimates.

Digitized by Google

pretations of this place, but I like this sense above all others. We are the fellow-heirs of Christ, so that we follow him the same way he went unto that inheritance. And so, whereas he made mention of Christ, his meaning is, (as it were by these degrees,[1]) to pass unto this cohortation, viz., the inheritance of God is therefore ours, because by his grace we are adopted to be his sons; and lest it should be doubtful, the possession thereof is already delivered unto Christ, whose partakers[2] we are made. And Christ came unto it by the cross, therefore we must go unto it in the same way. Neither is that to be feared which some stand in awe of, lest of this, Paul did ascribe the cause of eternal glory to our labours, for this kind of speech is not unusual in the Scriptures; but rather he declareth the order which the Lord followeth in ministering salvation unto us than the cause. For before he had sufficiently defended the free mercy of God against the merits of works; now, whilst he exhorteth us unto patience, he disputeth not whence salvation cometh to us, but how the Lord governeth his.

By passions and sufferings the Lord ministereth unto us salvation through his free mercy.

18. *For verily I think.* Although they do not altogether amiss who take this by the way of correction, yet I had rather refer it to the amplifying of the cohortation, instead of a *preoccupation*,[3] to this sense, It ought not to be grievous unto us if we must come unto the celestial glory by divers afflictions, seeing, if they be compared with the greatness of this glory they are nothing.[4] He hath put *glory to come* for *eternal glory;* as he calleth those afflictions of the world which pass away suddenly. Hereby it appeareth this place was ill understood of the schoolmen, whence they have gathered their[5] distinction of *congruo* and *condigno*. Neither doth the apostle compare the dignity of them both, but only mitigateth the bitterness of the cross by the comparison of the greatness of glory, and that to confirm the minds of the faithful in patience.

Glory to come put for eternal glory.

[1] "His gradibus," by these steps. [2] "Consortes," partners.
[3] "Vice anticipationis," by way of anticipation. [4] "Levissimi sunt momenti," are of the least moment. [5] "Frivolam," frivolous distinction.

Digitized by Google

19. *For the fervent expectation of the creature expecteth for the revelation of the sons of God.*
20. *For the creature is subject to vanity, not of its own will, but for him who hath made it subject in hope.*
21. *Because the creature also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*
22. *For we know that every creature groaneth with us also, and travaileth in pain together unto this present.*

19. *For the fervent.* He teacheth that we have an example of the patience he exhorteth unto even in the very dumb creatures. For, to let pass the variety of expositions, I understand this place thus, That there is no element, neither any part of the world, which not being (as it were) touched with the feeling of the present evil, intendeth not upon the hope of the resurrection.[1] And he putteth down two things, namely, that all creatures travail, and yet are sustained by hope. Whereby also it appeareth how great the price of eternal glory is, that it can provoke and draw all things into desire of it. Furthermore, this speech, *expectation expecteth*, although it be somewhat strange, yet it hath a most convenient sense; for he signifieth thereby, that the creatures being plunged in great anxiety, and hanging in suspense, with great desire do expect that day which shall openly declare the glory of the sons of God. He calleth that *the revelation of the sons of God*, when we shall be like unto God; as John saith, for although we know we are his sons, yet it hath not appeared. And I have kept the words of Paul, because the translation of Erasmus seemeth unto me bolder than were meet, namely, *until the sons of God be manifest*, and yet it doth not sufficiently express the mind of the apostle. For his meaning is not, that the sons of God shall be manifested in the last day; but then it shall appear how happy and blessed their estate is, when they, having put off corruption, shall put on celestial glory.

What is meant by the revelation of the sons of God.

1 John iii. 2.

[1] "Quæ non veluti præsentis miseriæ agnitionis tacta, in spem resurrectionis intenta sit," and which, being as it were touched with a sense of present misery, is not intent on the hope of (does not earnestly hope for) a resurrection.

Digitized by Google

For he, therefore, attributed hope unto the creatures that want sense, that the faithful might open their eyes to behold the invisible life, although it lie yet hid under a deformed habit.[1]

20. *For the creature is subject to vanity.* He declareth the end of the expectation by the contrary; for, because the creatures now subject to corruption cannot be renewed before the sons of God be wholly restored, therefore they, coveting their (instauration or) renewing,[2] respect the manifestation of the celestial kingdom. He saith they are subject to vanity, because they abide not in firm and sure estate, but as frail and unstable,[3] they pass away with swift course; for there is no doubt but he setteth vanity against the perfection of nature.

How the creatures are subject to vanity.

Not of its own will. Seeing there is no sense in such creatures, *will*, here, assuredly, is to be taken for natural inclination, whereby the whole nature of things is carried to his conservation and perfection. Whatsoever, therefore, is held under corruption, it is against the will of nature.[4] But, by the figure *prosopopeia*, he bringeth in all the parts of the world, as though they were indued with sense, that we might the rather be ashamed of our sottishness, unless the ruinous staggering of the world, which we see, do lift us up higher.

Prosopopœia is, when we give that to things without life which is proper to living things, &c.

But for him. He propoundeth an example of obedience in all creatures, and addeth, that the same proceedeth of hope, because hence cometh the alacrity of the sun, moon, and all the stars, to run their perpetual course,—hence cometh the sedulous obsequy of the earth to bring forth fruits,—hence cometh it [that] the air is never wearied with moving,—hence cometh the ready power of the waters to flow, because God hath given everything his charge; and hath not only by precise commandment charged what he would have done, but also inwardly hath put hope of renovation; for, in

[1] "Sub deformi habitu," under a mean garb. [2] "Suam instaurationem expetentes," longing for their renewal. [3] "Fluxæ," fleeting.
[4] "Invita igitur et repugnante natura vim patitur," suffers violence, nature being unwilling and repugnant.

Digitized by Google

that woeful dissipation which followed the fall of Adam, the whole frame of the world should fall every moment, and all the parts thereof should faint, except some certain secret stability proceeding elsewhere did stay them. It were, therefore, too absurd, that the earnest of the Spirit should be of less force in the sons of God than a secret instinct in dead creatures. Howsoever, then, the creatures do naturally incline another way, yet, because it pleaseth God to make them subject unto vanity, they obey his commandment; and because he hath given them hope of a better condition, therein they nourish themselves, deferring their desire until the incorruption promised to them be revealed. It is by the figure *prosopopeia* that he now attributeth hope unto them, as before to *will and nill*.

21. *Because the creature also.* He showeth how the creature in hope is made subject unto vanity; namely, because it shall come to pass that at length it shall be delivered; as Esay testifieth, and yet Peter also more clearly confirmeth.

The condemnation of mankind is graven in heaven, earth, and all creatures.

And here, verily, it is meet for us to consider what a horrible curse we have deserved, seeing all the harmless creatures from earth to heaven have suffered punishment for our sins; for in that they labour under corruption, that cometh to pass through our fault; so the condemnation of mankind is graven in heaven, earth, and all the creatures. Again, hereby appeareth unto how excellent glory the sons of God shall come, for the amplifying and setting forth whereof all creatures shall be renewed.

Finally, he meaneth not that the creatures shall be partakers of the same glory with the sons of God, but in their kind they shall be partakers of a better state; because God will restore the world, now fallen with mankind, into perfection. But what kind of integrity shall be as well in beasts as in plants and metals it is not meet curiously to search, neither is it lawful; because the chiefest part of corruption is utter decay. Certain subtle, but scarce sober men, demand whether all kind of beasts shall be immortal; but, if these speculations may have loose reins, whither will they carry us? Therefore, let us be content with this simple doctrine,

Digitized by Google

that there shall be such a temperature, and such a decent order, that nothing shall appear either deformed or ruinous.[1]

22. *For we know.* He repeateth the same sentence again, that he might make a passage unto us; although that [which] is now said hath the force and form of a conclusion; for in that the creatures are subject unto corruption, and that not by a natural appetite, but by the ordinance of God. Secondly, in that they have hope, in time to come, to put off corruption, it followeth they mourn as a woman travailing, until they be delivered. And it is a most apt and fit similitude, that we might know this mourning whereof he speaketh is not vain nor dead; because at length it shall bring forth a joyful and happy fruit. The sum is: The creatures neither are content with the present state, neither yet so travail, that they should fall away without remedy; but they travail, because there abideth for them a renewing into a better state.

How the creatures mourn together.

And when he saith they *mourn together*, he doth not mean they are tied amongst themselves by a mutual anxiety, but he joineth them for companions to us. The particle *hitherto*, or *unto this present*, serveth to mitigate the tediousness of (the) daily languor. For if the creatures have continued so many ages in their mourning, how inexcusable shall our tenderness, or rather cowardliness, be, if, in the short course of a frail life, we faint?

23. *And not only the creature, but we also, which have the first beginnings of the Spirit, even we do mourn in ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies.*
24. *For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for how can a man hope for that which he seeth?*
25. *But if we hope for that we see not, we do with patience abide for it.*

23. *And not only.* There are some who think the apostle's mind here is to exaggerate the dignity of our blessedness to come; because all things wish for it with fervent desire; not only the unreasonable creatures, but we also who are regenerate by the Spirit of God. Which sentence, truly,

[1] "Fluxum," fleeting.

Digitized by Google

may be defended. Yet it seemeth unto me to be a comparison of the greater and the lesser; as though he said, The excellency of our glory to come is of so great price to the elements also, wanting sense and reason, that they burn with a certain desire of it; much more ought we who are illuminated by the Spirit of God, both by firmness of faith and contention of study, aspire and strive unto so passing a good thing.[1] And he requireth a twofold affection in the faithful; namely, that they, being pressed with the feeling of the present misery, mourn. Secondly, That, nevertheless, they do patiently expect a deliverance. For he would that they, being lifted up with the expectation of the blessedness to come, should, with stoutness of mind, overcome all the present evils, that they might not consider what they are, but what they shall be.

A twofold affection required in the faithful.

Which have the first beginnings. Whereas some interpret *first-fruits*, a rare and singular excellency, that I like not at all; and, therefore, to avoid doubtfulness, I choose rather to translate it *first beginnings*. For I do not, with them, take it to be spoken of the apostles only, but of all the faithful, who in this world are only sprinkled with drops of the Spirit, or certainly, when they have profited very well, being indued with a certain measure thereof, are yet far from the perfection thereof. These, therefore, are unto the apostle *the first beginnings*, or *first-fruits;* whereunto the whole or entire increase is opposed. For seeing we are not yet indued with fulness, it is no marvel though we be moved with disquietness. And whereas he repeateth, *we ourselves*, and addeth, *in ourselves*, that he doth for the more vehemency that he might express a more fervent desire. And he doth not only name a desire, but a mourning;[2] for where there is a feeling of misery there is also mourning.

Expecting the adoption. Adoption here improperly, yet not without good reason, is called the fruition of that inheritance whereunto we are adopted. For Paul meaneth that that eternal decree of God, whereby he hath chosen us for sons

Adoption put for that inheritance we are adopted unto, and the fruition thereof.

[1] "Spei firmitudine et studii contentione ad tantum boni magnitudinem," with firm hope and earnest study [strive] for the attainment of so great a good. [2] "Gemitum," groaning.

Digitized by Google

before the world was made, of the which he testifieth unto us by the gospel, and the faith whereof he sealeth by his Spirit in our hearts, should be void, unless the promised resurrection were firm and sure, which is an effect thereof. For to what end is God our Father, but that this earthly pilgrimage being ended the celestial inheritance might receive us? Hereunto appertaineth *the redemption of our body*, which is straightway added. For the price of our redemption was so paid of Christ, that death, nevertheless, might hold us yet bound in his bonds; yea, we carry it within us. Whereupon it followeth that the sacrifice of the death of Christ should be in vain and fruitless, except there appeared fruit in the celestial renovation.

24. *For we are saved by hope.* Paul confirmeth his exhortation by another argument; namely, because our salvation cannot be separated from a kind of death, which he proveth by the nature of hope. For seeing hope extendeth itself unto things not yet known by experience, and representeth unto our minds the image of things which are hid and far off, whatsoever is either openly seen, or holden with the hand, cannot be hoped for. But Paul taketh it for a thing so granted, that it cannot be denied, so long as we live in this world, our salvation standeth in hope; whereby it followeth that it is laid up with God, far above our senses. Whereas he saith that is no hope which is seen, it is, verily, a hard speech, but yet such as obscureth not the sense; for he goeth about simply to teach, seeing hope is of good things to come and not present, it can never be joined with manifest possession. So, then, if any think much to mourn, they must needs evert the order[1] [which] is set down of God, who doth not call his unto the triumph before he have exercised them in the warfare of sufferance. But seeing it hath pleased God to nourish our salvation as it were secretly in his bosom, it is expedient for us to labour in earth, to be oppressed, to mourn, to be afflicted, yea, to lie as it were half dead, or like unto those [that] are dead. For they who

[1] "Evertant," overturn.

Digitized by Google

covet a visible salvation, they put themselves by it, renouncing hope which is ordained of God to be the keeper of it.

25. *But if we hope for that we see not.* This is an argument taken from the antecedent to the consequent, because patience necessarily followeth hope; for if it be grievous to want the good thing thou desirest, unless thou support and comfort thyself by patience, thou must fall by desperation. So, then, hope always draweth patience with it. So it is a most fit conclusion, namely, that that doth vanquish away whatsoever the gospel promiseth of the glory of the resurrection, except by bearing the cross and tribulations patiently we pass through this present life; for if life be invisible, then we must have death before our eyes; if glory be invisible, then ignominy is present; therefore, if thou wilt comprise this place in few words, thou mayest digest the arguments of Paul into this form: Salvation is laid up in hope for all the faithful; it is the property of hope to intend[1] upon good things to come, and which are absent; therefore, the salvation of the godly is hidden up. Now, hope is not otherwise maintained than by patience; therefore, the salvation of the godly is not consummated but by patience. Finally, here we have a notable place, that patience is an inseparable companion of faith. The reason whereof is at hand, because, whilst we comfort ourselves with the hope of a better estate, the sense or feeling of the present miseries is mollified and mitigated, that they are not so hard to be borne.

The salvation of the godly is laid up in hope.

Patience is an inseparable companion of faith.

26. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what to pray* [for] *as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh request for us with sighs which cannot be expressed.*

27. *But he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the meaning of the Spirit; for he maketh request for the saints, according to the will of God.*

26. *Likewise the Spirit also.* Lest the faithful should ob-

[1] "Intentam esse," to be intent.

Digitized by Google

ject that they are weaker than they are able to bear so many and so hard burdens, he setteth before them the help of the Spirit, which is abundantly sufficient to overcome all difficulties. There is no cause, then, why any should complain that the bearing of the cross is above their strength, seeing we are strengthened by virtue from above. And the Greek word *συναντιλαμβανεσθαι, to help together*, is very significant, namely, that the Spirit receiveth unto it part of the burden wherewith our infirmity is oppressed, doth not only help us and succour us, but doth so ease us as though it undertook some part of the burden with us. And in the word *infirmities*, the plural number hath his augmentation; for seeing experience doth teach us that unless we be stayed by the power of God, innumerable ruins are straightway at hand, Paul, therefore, admonisheth, that, notwithstanding we are every way weak, and divers infirmities threaten falling under us, yet there is aid enough in the Spirit of God, so that we shall never be moved or overthrown by any heap of evils; howbeit these helps of the Spirit teach us more certainly, that through the ordinance of God it is so brought to pass, that by mournings and sighs we should ascend[1] to our redemption.

For we know not what to pray. Above he spake of the testimony of the Spirit, whereby we know God to be our Father, and whereunto we, trusting, dare call upon God as Father; now repeating, again, this second member of invocation, he saith, we are taught of the same Spirit how he is to be called upon, and what is to be asked of him by prayers. And very aptly he hath annexed prayers to the careful or heavy[2] desires of the faithful, because God doth not, therefore, afflict his with miseries, that they should inwardly devour up a hidden or secret sorrow; but that, by prayer, they should (exonerate and) ease themselves, and so exercise their faith. And, albeit I know there are divers interpretations brought upon this place, yet the meaning of Paul seemeth unto me to be simply thus, That we are blind in praying unto God, because, although we feel our evils, yet

Wherefore the godly are afflicted.

[1] "Enitamur," strive. [2] "Anxiis," anxious.

Digitized by Google

our minds are more intricated and confounded, than that they can rightly elect what is convenient or expedient. If any man except that there is a rule prescribed unto us in the word of God, I answer, our affections, nevertheless, abide oppressed with darkness, until the Spirit direct them by his light.

Objection.

Answer.

But the Spirit itself maketh request for us. Although in deed, or by the event, it appeareth not as yet that our prayers are heard of God, nevertheless, Paul gathereth that, even in the very study of praying, the presence of God's grace already shineth; because no man of himself can conceive holy and godly prayers. Indeed, the faithless babble prayers, but with mere mocking of God; because there is nothing in them either sincere, or serious, or rightly composed. Wherefore the manner of praying well must needs be taught of the Spirit; he, therefore, calleth those sighs unutterable whereinto we burst through the vehement motion of the Spirit, because they far exceed the capacity of our wit. And the Spirit of God is said to make intercession for us, not that, indeed, humbly kneeling, it doth abase itself to pray or mourn, but because it stirreth up those prayers in our hearts, wherewithal it is meet we should be touched. Secondly, it doth so move our hearts, that with their fervency they pierce unto the very heaven. And Paul spake so, to the end he might more significantly attribute all that unto the grace of the Spirit. Indeed, we are bidden knock; but no man can of himself premeditate one syllable, unless by the secret instinct of his Spirit God knock upon us, and so open our hearts unto him.

How the Spirit is said to make intercession for us.

27. *But he that searcheth the hearts knoweth the cogitations.* This is a notable reason to confirm our faith or confidence, that we are heard of God whilst we pray by his Spirit. For he knoweth familiarly our desires as the cogitations of his Spirit. And here the propriety of the word *know* is to be noted; for it signifieth, that God doth not consider those motions of the Spirit as new and insolent,[1] or reject them

[1] "Insolentes," unusual

Digitized by Google

as absurd; but acknowledges them, and also graciously receives them as known and approved of him. Therefore, as Paul testified of late that God doth then help us whilst he doth, as it were, bring us into his own bosom, so now he addeth another consolation, namely, that our prayers, whereof he is the moderator, are not in vain.[1] The reason, also, is added straightway; because in so doing he conformeth us to his will. Whereby it falleth out, that that cannot be in vain which is agreeable to his will, whereby all things are governed. Here, also, we may learn, that consent with the will of God is the chiefest thing in prayer, which consent our own desires hold not fast tied unto them.[2] Wherefore, if we would have our prayers acceptable unto God, let us beseech him to moderate them according to his will.

28. *Also, we know that all things work together for the best unto them that love God; namely, to them who are called saints according to his purpose.*

29. *For those which he knew before, he also predestinated to be made like to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born amongst many brethren.*

30. *And whom he hath predestinated, them also he called; and whom he called, them also he justified; and whom he justified, them also he glorified.*

28. *Also, we know.* Out of the premises he now concludeth, that the miseries of this life are so far from hindering our salvation, that rather they further it. Neither letteth it that he hath put the particle illative, seeing it is no novelty with him so to confound adverbs; although this conclusion doth also contain a *preoccupation*. For here the sense of flesh exclaimeth, that it appeareth not [that] God doth hear our prayers, seeing our afflictions proceed always in the same course. Therefore, the apostle preventeth that, saying, although God doth not by and by help his, yet he doth not forsake them; because by a wonderful skill he turneth those

[1] "Minime frustratum iri," will by no means be frustrated.

[2] "Primas tenere partes in oratione consensum cum voluntate Domini, quem nostra ipsorum desideria minime alligatum tenent," the first thing requisite in prayer is accordance with the will of the Lord, who is by no means bound to follow our desires.

Digitized by Google

things to their salvation which seemed discommodities. If any had rather read this sentence by itself, as though Paul went about, by a new argument, to prove that adversities which further our salvation are not heavily and grievously to be borne, I do not gainstand it. In the meanwhile, the counsel of Paul is not obscure, Although the elect and reprobate are indifferently subject to the like evils, yet there is great difference; because God, instructing the faithful by afflictions, doth procure their salvation. And we are to remember that Paul speaketh not but of adversities; as though he said, Whatsoever things happen to the godly, they are so tempered from above, that that which the world thinketh to be hurtful, the issue declareth it to be profitable. For, albeit that is true which Augustine saith, Even sins, through the direction of God's providence, are so far from hurting the saints, that they serve rather to their health; yet it appertaineth not unto this place, where he intreateth of the cross. And note, that he hath comprehended the sum of piety under the love of God; as, indeed, the whole study of righteousness dependeth thereon.

Adversities, by the providence of God, are made commodious to the faithful.

To those who are called according to his purpose. This parcel seemeth to be added by the way of correction; lest any should think that the faithful, because they love God, do obtain by their desert that they receive such fruit by adversities. For we know, when the matter of salvation is in hand, men would gladly begin at themselves, and feign unto themselves preparations whereby they may prevent[1] the grace of God. Therefore, Paul teacheth, that those whom he calleth the worshippers of God were elected before of him. For it is sure the order is therefore noted, that we might know whereas all things fall out for the health of the godly, that dependeth upon the free adoption of God, as the first cause. Yea, Paul showeth that the faithful love not God before they be called of him; as in another place he admonisheth, that the Galatians were first known of God before they knew him. Verily, this of Paul is true, that afflictions profit none to salvation but those [who] love

Gal. iv. 9.

[1] "Antevertant," anticipate.

Digitized by Google

God; yet that of John is as true, namely, that then at length he is begun to be loved of us when he hath prevented us by his free grace.[1] God preventeth us by his grace, and we do not prevent him by our love.

Finally, the calling Paul speaketh of here is large. For it must not be restrained unto the manifestation of election, whereof mention shall be made shortly after, but simply it is opposed to man's course; as though Paul had said, The faithful get not unto themselves godliness by their own motion, but rather it is brought by the hand of God, so far as God hath chosen them to himself for his own. The word *purpose* doth plainly exclude whatsoever may be imagined to be brought of men, as though Paul denied the causes of our election to be sought for elsewhere than in the secret pleasure of God. Which thing appeareth more clearly out of the 1st to the Ephes. 1, and 2 Tim. i.; where, also, the antithesis (or contrariety) of this purpose and human righteousness is plainly expressed. Yet it is not to be doubted but Paul did, therefore, here precisely say, our salvation is founded upon the election of God, that he might thence make a passage unto that which followeth straightway, namely, that afflictions which make us like unto Christ are destined to us by the same celestial decree, that he might, as it were, by a certain bond of necessity, link our salvation with the bearing of the cross. Eph. i. 1. 2 Tim. i.

29. *Because whom he foreknew.* Therefore, by the order of election, he declareth how all afflictions are nothing else than a mean whereby they are conformed to Christ, which thing to be necessary he testified before. Wherefore, there is no cause why it should grieve us, or be bitter and heavy unto us, to be afflicted, except we take in ill part the election of the Lord, whereby we are foreordained unto life; except we be unwilling to represent in us the image of the Son of God, whereby we are prepared unto the celestial glory. And the foreknowledge of God, whereof Paul here maketh mention, is not a bare foreknowledge, as some unskilful bodies do foolishly imagine, but adoption, whereby he always Verse 17. What is meant by foreknowledge.

[1] "Ubi nos gratuito amore prævenit," when he first gratuitously loves us.

Digitized by Google

discerneth his sons from the reprobate. In which sense Peter saith, the faithful were elected unto the sanctification of the Spirit, according to the foreknowledge of God. Wherefore, they [whom] I spake on [of] gather foolishly, that God hath elected no others than those he foresaw to be worthy of his grace. For Peter doth not flatter the faithful, as though every one were elected for his merit; but, calling them unto the eternal counsel of God, doth put them beside all worthiness.[1] And also in this place, Paul repeateth by another word, that which he touched lately concerning purpose. Whence it followeth that this knowledge dependeth upon the good pleasure of God, because God foreknew nothing out of himself touching those he would adopt, but only signed[2] whom he would elect. The word προορίζειν, which they translate *predestinate*, is referred unto the circumstance of this place; because Paul only meaneth, that God hath so decreed, that whomsoever he hath adopted, the same should carry the image of Christ; for he did not simply say, that they might be conformed unto Christ, but to *the image of Christ;* that he might show there is a lively and manifest example in Christ, which is set before all the sons of God to imitate. Finally, the sum is, that the free adoption wherein our salvation consisteth, cannot be separated from this other decree, wherein he hath allotted us to bear the cross; because none can be an heir of the kingdom of heaven who first is not made like unto the only begotten Son of God.

Christ is the pattern of all the sons of God.

That he might be the first-begotten, or, *that he should be;* for both ways the Greek infinitive, Εἶναι, may be resolved; yet I rather allow of the former. Furthermore, in that Christ is called the first-begotten, Paul's mind is only to note this, If Christ obtain the prerogative amongst all the sons of God, he is worthily given unto us for an example, that we should refuse nothing which he hath vouchsafed to take upon him. Therefore, that the celestial Father might by all means testify the right and dignity which he hath given unto his Son, he will have all whom he hath adopted into the inheritance

[1] "Omni dignitate prorsus abdicat," declares them utterly void of all goodness.

[2] "Signavit," marked out.

Digitized by Google

of his kingdom to be conformed or made like to his example. For although there be in show a divers condition of the godly, as there is some variety between the members of a man's body; yet is every one coupled with his head. Therefore, as the first-born doth bear the name of the family, so Christ is placed in a high degree; not only that he might excel in honour among the faithful, but also that, under the common note of fraternity, he might contain all under him.

30. *And whom he hath predestinated, them also he called.* Now, that he might in a clearer sort prove how true it is, that that conformation, or conformity and likeness with the humility of Christ, is healthful to us, he useth a gradation, wherein he teacheth that the society of the cross is so linked with our vocation, justification, and glorification, that they cannot be separated. Howbeit, that the readers might better understand the meaning of the apostle, they are to remember that [which] I admonished before, namely, that the word *predestinate* noteth not election, but the purpose or decree of God, whereby he hath ordained for his a cross to be borne; and now, teaching that the same are called, he signifieth that God doth not hold that close within himself which he hath determined of them, but hath disclosed it, that they might quietly and patiently undertake the condition laid upon them. For here vocation, (or calling,) as the inferior, is distinguished from secret election. Lest any, therefore, should object, that no man knoweth what condition God hath appointed for him, the apostle saith, God, by his calling, hath openly testified of his secret counsel. And this testimony consisteth not in the sole external preaching, but it hath the efficacy of the Spirit coupled; because the speech is of the elect, whom God doth not only speak unto by voice, but also inwardly draweth. Justification might fitly be extended unto the continual tenor of the grace of God, even from the time of our calling unto the hour of death; but because Paul, in the whole Epistle, useth this word for the free imputation of righteousness, no necessity doth compel to decline from this sense. For the counsel of Paul is this, that there is a more precious reward offered than that we ought to refuse afflic-

What the word predestinate noteth.

Digitized by Google

tions; for what is more to be wished for, than to be reconciled to God, that our miseries be no more tokens of malediction or curse, neither tend to our destruction? Therefore, he addeth straightway, that the same are glorified who are now pressed with the cross, so that their miseries and reproaches damage them nothing at all. Although glorification is not yet exhibited but in our Head, yet, because we do in a manner see in him now the inheritance of eternal life, his glory bringeth such assurance of our glory to us, that worthily our hope is matched or compared to present possession. And add, that Paul, according to the phrase of the Hebrew tongue, hath used the preter tense in the verbs for the present tense. Surely, it is out of question, that a continual action is noted to this sense; whom God now, after his own counsel, exerciseth with adversity, those he also calleth and justifieth into the hope of salvation; so that they lose no iota of glory whilst they are humbled. For, albeit the present miseries do deform it before the world, yet before God and his angels it always appeareth perfect. This, therefore, is the meaning of Paul by this gradation, that the afflictions of the faithful, whereby they are humbled, do not appertain to any other end, than that they, having obtained the glory of the celestial kingdom, might come unto the glory of the resurrection of Christ, with whom they are now crucified.

The godly lose no iota of glory whilst they are humbled.

31. *What shall we say, then, to these things? If God be on our side, who can be against us?*
32. *Who spared not his own Son, but gave him for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things also?*
33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's chosen? It is God that justifieth.*
34. *Who shall condemn? It is Christ which is dead, yea, or rather, which is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God, and maketh request for us.*

31. *What shall we say, then?* Now, the matter being sufficiently proved, he bursteth forth into exclamations, whereby he declareth with what magnanimity of mind the faithful ought to be indued whilst adversities press them unto

Digitized by Google

desperation. And in these words he teacheth how that invincible fortitude, which overcometh all temptations, consisteth in the fatherly favour of God. For we know that judgment is wont no otherwise to be given of the love or hatred of God than by the consideration of the present state. Therefore, when things fall out unhappily, sorrow possessing our minds, it driveth away all confidence and consolation; but Paul crieth out that the beginning must be further sought forth;[1] and, therefore, they reason preposterously who stay upon the sorrowful spectacle of our warfare. Indeed, I confess the scourges of God, (in themselves,) and by themselves, are worthily counted signs of God's wrath; but because they are blessed in Christ, Paul commandeth the saints before all things to lay hold of the fatherly love of God; that, trusting to this shield, they may boldly triumph over all evil. For this is a brazen wall unto us, that by the favour of God we should be secure against all dangers. Yet his meaning is not that we should have no adversity, but he promiseth victory against all sorts of enemies.

What the scourges of God are in themselves.

If God be on our side. This is the chief, and surely the only, stay that supporteth us in all temptations. For, except God be gracious unto us, although all things laugh upon us, yet no certain trust can be conceived. And, on the contrary, his only favour is a sufficient solace in all sorrow, and a strong defence against all tempests of adversities. And hereunto appertain so many testimonies of Scripture, where the saints, trusting to the only power of God, dare despise whatsoever thing cometh against them in this world. "If I shall walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will not fear evil; because thou art with me." Ps. xxiii. 4. "I trust in the Lord; what shall flesh do unto me?" Ps. xl. 1. "I will not be afraid of a thousand of people, that have compassed me round about." Ps. iii. 7. For there is no power under heaven, or above heaven, which can resist the arm of the Lord. Therefore, he being our defender, no harm at all is to be feared. Wherefore, he declareth true trust in God, who, being content with his protection, feareth nothing so that

The favour of God the only fountain of all consolation.

[1] "Principium altius petendum," that we must look deeper for its first beginning.

Digitized by Google

he should despair; surely the faithful are oftentimes shaken, but are never utterly cast down. Finally, hither tendeth the counsel of the apostle, namely, that a godly mind ought to stand upon the inward testimony of the Spirit, and not depend upon external things.

32. *Who spared not his own Son.* Because it standeth us greatly upon to be so thoroughly persuaded of the fatherly love of God that we may persist in this glorying, therefore, Paul bringeth forth the price of our reconciliation, to the end he might prove that God doth favour us. And surely this is a notable and rich experiment[1] of inestimable love, that the Father hath not refused to bestow his Son upon our salvation. From thence, therefore, Paul draweth an argument from the greater to the less, Seeing he had nothing more notable,[2] or precious, or excellent, than him, undoubtedly he will neglect nothing which he foreseeth may be profitable for us. This place ought to admonish and awake us to consider what Christ bringeth with him to us, to behold his riches; for, as he is the pledge of the unspeakable love of God towards us, so he is not sent bare or void unto us; but being filled with all heavenly treasures, lest they which possess him should want anything that might make to perfect felicity. And *to deliver*, here signifieth, *to give unto death.*

To deliver, for to give unto death.

33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge?* The first and chiefest consolation which the godly have in adversity is, that they be certainly persuaded of the fatherly love of God; because hence cometh both the certainty of salvation and the quiet peace of conscience whereby adversities are made sweet, or, at the least, the bitterness of sorrow is mitigated. Therefore, a more apt exhortation unto patience cannot be brought, than when we understand that God is gracious unto us. And, therefore, Paul maketh this confidence the beginning of consolation, whereby it behoveth the faithful to be strengthened

[1] "Documentum," proof.

[2] "Charius," dearer.

Digitized by Google

against all adversities. And because man's salvation is first wounded by accusation, and then overthrown by condemnation, he taketh away the danger of accusation in the first place; for there is one God, before whose tribunal seat we must all stand. Seeing, then, he justifieth us, there remaineth no place for accusation. Indeed, the antitheses seem not to be exactly digested into their parts; for he should rather have opposed these two members between themselves: *Who shall accuse?* It is Christ that maketh *intercession*, than to have added the other two, *Who shall condemn? It is God that justifieth;* for the absolution (or deliverance) of God answereth condemnation; and the defence (or supportation) of Christ answereth accusation. But Paul, not without cause, hath transposed them another way, going about[1] to arm the sons of God from top to toe (as they say) with the confidence of God, which might banish afar off anxieties and fears. More emphatically, therefore, he gathereth that the sons of God are not subject to accusation, because God doth justify, than if he had said, because Christ is their patron; for so he expresseth better how the way is far shut up[2] to judgment, where the judge doth pronounce himself, that he altogether exempteth him from guiltiness whom the accusator would draw into punishment. And there is also the like reason of the second part of the antithesis (or contrariety;) for he showeth that the faithful are far from the peril of condemnation, seeing Christ, by making satisfaction for their sins, hath prevented the judgment of God, and by his intercession hath not only abolished death, but also put our sins out of remembrance, that they come not into account. The sum is, that we are, not only by the present remedies,[3] when we come unto the judgment-seat of God, to be delivered from fear; but God doth help more,[4] that he might better provide for our confidence.

Howbeit, here we are to note that which I have always admonished of before this, namely, that *to justify*, with Paul, is nothing else than being loosed from the sentence of God; What it is to justify.

[1] "Volens," wishing. [2] "Viam judicio eminus præclusam esse," that the way of judgment is completely excluded. [3] "Præsentibus remediis," by remedies at the time. [4] "Longius occurrere," makes earlier provision.

Digitized by Google

to be counted for just. And it is no hard matter to prove that in this present place, where Paul reasoneth from the putting down of one contrary unto the destruction of another; if so that [since] to absolve and to receive for guilty be contrary. Therefore God will not admit any accusation against us; because he hath absolved us from every offence; for undoubtedly the devil is the accuser of all the godly. The law of God itself, and also their own conscience, doth reprove them; but all these prevail nothing before that Judge who doth justify them. Therefore, no adversary can shake, much less overthrow, our salvation. Furthermore, he so nameth the elect, that he doubteth nothing of himself to be in the number of them. And that not by special revelation, (as certain sophisters feign,) but by the common sense of all[1] the godly. Let every one, therefore, of the godly, by the example of Paul, apply that unto himself which is here said of the elect. Otherwise, if he did bury election in the secret counsel of God, this doctrine were not only cold, but should lie altogether dead. But, seeing we know that that is purposely here uttered which every one of the godly ought to apply unto himself, out of question we are all of us led unto the touchstone[2] of our vocation, that we be resolved we are the sons of God.

Here is a general rule prescribed.

34. *Who shall condemn?* As none can prevail by accusing when the Judge hath absolved, so there remaineth no condemnation when the laws are satisfied, and now the penalty is paid.[3] But Christ is the man, who once hath suffered the punishment due unto us, thereby professing himself to undertake our turns,[4] that he might deliver us; he, therefore, that hereafter will condemn us must call Christ himself again unto death. And he is not only dead, but, by his resurrection, hath appeared victor of death, and hath triumphed over the power thereof. And he addeth yet more, namely, that he *sitteth at the right hand of the Father;* whereby is meant,

How Christ is said to sit on the right hand of the Father.

[1] "Sed ex communi piorum omnium sensu," but by a feeling common to all the godly. [2] "Ad examen," to an examination. [3] "Jam est pœna persoluta," and the penalty is already paid. [4] "Vices," place.

Digitized by Google

that he obtaineth the Lordship and full authority of heaven and earth,[1] as it is said to the Ephesians. Eph. i. 20.

Lastly, he teacheth that he sitteth so, that he is the perpetual advocate and intercessor for the defence of our salvation. Whence it followeth, that if any will condemn us, he doth not only make void the death of Christ, but also fighteth against that incomparable power wherewith the Father hath adorned him, placing him in the highest degree with such power.[2] This so great boldness, which dare triumph against the devil, death, sin, and the gates of hell, ought to rest in all godly hearts; because our faith is no faith unless we do certainly persuade ourselves that Christ is ours, and that the Father is merciful[3] unto us in him. Nothing, therefore, can be imagined more pestilent, or more deadly, than the school doctrine of the uncertainty of salvation.

Who maketh intercession for us. It was necessary this should be plainly added, lest the Divine Majesty of Christ should make us afraid. Although, therefore, from his high throne, he holdeth all things in subjection under his feet, yet Paul giveth unto him the person of a Mediator, of whose countenance to be afraid were absurd, seeing he doth not only gently invite us unto him, but also appeareth an intercessor for us before the Father. Finally, we must not measure this intercession by carnal sense. For he is not to be thought to beseech his Father humbly upon his knees, with his hands stretched out;[4] but because he appeareth still[5] with his death and resurrection, which are instead of an eternal intercession, and have the efficacy of lively prayer, that they may reconcile the Father to us, and make him entreatable, he is worthily said to make intercession for us. How Christ is said to make intercession for us.

35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*

[1] "Plenumque rerum omnium arbitrium ac moderationem," and full power and rule over all things, omitted. [2] "Summum ei imperium deferens cum tanta virtute," with such power bestowing on him supreme authority. [3] "Propitium," propitious. [4] "Flexis genibus, manibus expansis," with bended knees and outstretched hands. [5] "Assidue," continually.

Digitized by Google

36. *As it is written, For thy sake we die daily ; we are counted as sheep appointed for the slaughter.*
37. *But in all those things we overcome by him who hath loved us.*

35. *Who shall separate?* Now that security (or boldness) is extended unto inferior things; for he which is persuaded of the love of God towards him, is able to stand in most grievous afflictions; which are, therefore, wont so greatly to torment men, either because they think not they happen by the providence of God; or they interpret them to be tokens of God's wrath; or that they think they are forsaken of God; or that they look for no end; or remember not there is a better life, or some other such like. But the mind which is purged from such errors shall easily be at rest, and be quiet. Finally, this is the meaning of the words, Whatsoever happeneth we must stand in this faith, namely, that God, who hath once loved us, will never cease to care for us. For he doth not simply say, there is nothing can separate God from the love of us; but he would that the knowledge and lively sense of love which he testifieth unto us should so flourish in our hearts, that it might always shine in the mist of afflictions. For as the clouds, although they darken the clear sight of the sun, yet do not altogether deprive us of his shine; even so God, in adversities, sendeth through clouds the beams of his grace, lest any temptation should overwhelm us with despair; yea, our faith being supported by the promises of God, as by wings, ought, through all impediments which are in the way, to pierce up into the heavens. Indeed, it is true that adversities are tokens of God's wrath, if they be esteemed by themselves; but when pardon and reconciliation is gone before, we are to be resolved, that although God doth chasten, yet he will never forget his mercy. Verily, he admonisheth[1] what we have deserved, but withal he testifieth that he hath a care of our salvation, whilst he provoketh[2] us unto repentance. And he calleth it *the love of Christ*, because the Father in a manner doth open his bowels unto us in him. Seeing, then, the love of God is not

[1] "Admonet," reminds us of. [2] "Sollicitat," solicits.

Digitized by Google

to be sought for out of Christ, worthily doth Paul call us hither; that in the beams of the grace of Christ our faith might behold the clear countenance of the Father. The sum is, that this faith ought not to be shaken with any adversity; for God being gracious unto us, nothing is against us. Whereas, some take the *love of Christ* passively, for that love wherewith he is loved of us, as though Paul armed us unto invincible fortitude, this imagination is easily refuted by the whole course of Paul's speech; and straightway, also, Paul will remove all doubt herein, by defining this love more clearly.

Tribulation, or anguish, or persecution? The pronoun masculine, which he put down of late, containeth a secret emphasis (or force.) For when he might have said in the neuter gender, *what shall separate us?* he chose rather to attribute the person[1] unto the dumb creatures, that he might commit into the fight with us so many champions[2] as there be kinds of temptations which assault our faith. Furthermore, these three differ amongst themselves thus, that *tribulation* comprehendeth every kind of grief and discommodity; but *anguish* is an inward passion, namely, whilst extremities drive us unto our wit's end. Such was the anguish of Abraham and Lot, whilst the one was constrained to offer his wife, the other his daughters; because they being hard bestead, and wrapped in on every side,[3] could not tell what to do. *Persecution* properly noteth tyrannical violence, whereby the sons of God are unworthily vexed of the wicked. And although Paul denieth the sons to be distressed, or to be brought into narrow straits, yet he is not contrary to himself; because he doth not simply make them free from painful care, but he understandeth they are delivered; as also the examples of Abraham and Lot declare.

How tribulation, anguish, and persecution differ.

2 Cor. iv. 8.

36. *As it is written.* This testimony bringeth great weight unto the cause. For he insinuateth how we ought to be so far off from falling away through the fear of death, that this

Ps. xliv. 22.

[1] "Personam," personality. [2] "Ut totidem athletas committeret nobiscum in certamen," that he might assist us in the fight with as many champions. [3] "Perplexi," perplexed.

Digitized by Google

is almost fatal to the servants of God to have death, as it were, always present before their eyes. It is probable (or like) that the miserable oppression of the people under the tyranny of Antiochus is described in that Psalm; because it is precisely expressed, that they raged against the worshippers of God so cruelly, for no other cause than for the hatred of true godliness. There is also added a notable protestation, that yet they fell not away from the covenant of God; which thing, I suppose, was chiefly noted of Paul; neither doth it let that the saints there complain of calamity which then pressed them otherwise than it was wont. For seeing they first having testified their innocency, then show how they were oppressed with so many evils, an argument is conveniently taken thence, namely, that it is no new thing if the Lord permit the godly without desert to be cruelly intreated of the wicked. And it is out of question, that the same cometh not to pass but for their profit; seeing the Scripture teacheth that it is far from the righteousness of
Gen. xviii. 23. God to destroy the just with the unjust; but rather it is meet to requite affliction to those [that] do afflict, and de-
2 Thess. i. 6, 7. liverance to those [who] are afflicted. Secondly, They affirm that they suffer for the Lord; and Christ denounceth
Matth. v. 10. them blessed that suffer for righteousness sake. And whereas they say they die daily, thereby they signify, that death doth so hang over their heads, that such a life differeth nothing in a manner from death.

37. *We overcome by him.* That is, we wrestle forth always and escape. I have retained the word which Paul useth, (*supervincimus*,) though it be not so common with the Latins. For sometimes it happeneth that the faithful seem to be overcome, and to lie forlorn, [so that] the Lord doth not only so exercise them, but also humble them. Yet this issue is always given, that they obtain the victory. Nevertheless, to the end they might consider whence this invincible strength is, he repeateth that again which he said before; for he doth not only teach, that God, because he loveth us, therefore putteth his hand under us to stay us; but also he confirmeth that same sentence of the love of Christ. And this one

Digitized by Google

word doth sufficiently declare, that the apostle speaketh not of the fervency of that love wherewith we love God, but of the fatherly love of God and Christ towards us, the persuasion whereof being thoroughly printed in our hearts, it will always draw us from the gates of hell into the light of life, and will be of sufficient strength to support us.

38. *For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

39. *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.*

That he might the rather confirm us in those things which are felt, now he bursteth also into hyperbolical (or excessive) speeches: Whatsoever (quoth he) is in life or death, which may seem to be able to separate us from God, shall prevail nothing; yea, the angels themselves, if they go about to overthrow this foundation, shall not hurt us. Neither doth it withstand, that angels are ministering spirits, ordained for the health of the elect; for Paul (here) reasoneth from that which is impossible; as he doth also to the Galatians. Wherein we may observe how all things ought to be vile unto us, in respect of the glory of God, seeing it is lawful for the maintenance of his truth, not to care, yea, even for the angels. By the names of *principalities* and *powers*, angels are also signified, being so called because they are special[1] instruments of God's power. And these two words are added, to the end that if the word *angels* were not significant enough, by these somewhat more might be expressed. Except you had rather understand it thus, Neither angels, and whatsoever high powers there are; which is a kind of speech, when we talk of things that are unknown to us, and exceeding our capacity.

Heb. i. 4.

Gal. i. 4.

Why angels are called principalities and powers.

38. *Neither things present, nor things to come.* Although he speaketh hyperbolically (or excessively,) yet, indeed, he

[1] "Primaria," primary.

Digitized by Google

affirmeth, that by no continuance of time it can come to pass that we should be separated from the grace of God, which was necessary to have been added, because we are not only to fight with the sorrow which we feel of the present evils, but also with fear and carefulness, wherewithal the dangers to come do vex us. The meaning, therefore, is, that we are not to fear, lest the continuance of miseries, how long soever it be, should put out the faith of adoption. This doth plainly impugn the schoolmen, who babble that no man is sure to persevere unto the end, but by the benefit of special revelation, which they make to be most rare. By which doctrine faith is wholly destroyed, which in truth is none, unless it be extended unto death, and also after death; but we, on the contrary, must believe that he who hath begun in us a good work, will perform it until the day of the Lord Jesus.

39. *Which is in Christ.* That is, whereof Christ is the bond; for he is the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father
Matth. iii. 17. is well pleased. Wherefore, if we cleave unto God by him, we may assure ourselves of the immutable and incessant love of God towards us. Finally, here he speaketh more distinctly than he did of late, placing the fountain of love in the Father, and affirming that it floweth from Christ unto us.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, mine own conscience bearing me witness together with the Holy Spirit,*
2. *That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.*
3. *I would wish myself to be accursed or abandoned from Christ for my brethren; I say, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*

Digitized by Google

4. *Who are the Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and glory, and testaments, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ;*
5. *Of whom are the fathers, and of whom Christ is, according to the flesh, who is God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.*

In this chapter he beginneth to meet with those offences which might turn away the hearts of men from Christ; namely, that the Jews, for whom he was ordained by the covenant of the law, did not only refuse or contemn him, but for the most part did abhor him; for hereupon one of these two were thought to follow: either that the promises of God were not true, or else that that Jesus whom Paul preached was not the Anointed of the Lord, which was peculiarly promised to the Jews. Both which doubts Paul doth most ably unfold in that which followeth. Howbeit he doth so handle this place that he doth bridle himself from all bitterness against the Jews, lest he should exasperate their minds, and yet he yieldeth not one hairbreadth unto them to the damage of the gospel.

For he so giveth to them their ornaments, that he derogateth nothing at all from Christ; but he passeth, as it were, so abruptly to make mention thereof, that there appeareth no joining[1] (or hanging together) of speech ; and yet he so beginneth a new matter, as though he had touched it before. This he therefore doth, because, having finished the treatise of doctrine, when he turneth his mind unto the Jews, being astonished at their incredulity as at a wonder, he bursteth forth into a sudden protestation, no otherwise than if he would intreat of a thing handled before, seeing there was none in whose mind this cogitation would not voluntarily arise. If this be the doctrine of the law and the prophets, how cometh it then to pass that the Jews do so stubbornly refuse it? Add, that it was a thing everywhere known, whatsoever hitherto he had said of the law of Moses and the grace of Christ, to have been more detested of the Jews than that by their consent the faith of the Gentiles

[1] "Orationis contextus," connection in the discourse.

Digitized by Google

should be helped. Wherefore, it was needful this offence should be taken out of the way, lest it should hinder the course of the gospel.

1. *I speak the truth in Christ.* Because this opinion was presumed amongst the most part, that Paul was, as it were, a sworn enemy of his nation, so that he was greatly[1] suspected also of those [that] were of the household of faith, as though he taught a falling away[2] from Moses, before he begins to dispute of the purposed matter, he useth a preface to prepare the minds of the readers unto him, where he cleareth himself of that false suspicion of evil will towards the Jews. And because the thing was not unworthy of an oath, and he also saw his affirmation would scarcely be believed against the already conceived prejudice, he testifieth by an oath that he speaketh the truth. By which example, and such like, (as I admonished in the first chapter,) we ought to learn what oaths be lawful; namely, which cause that truth to be believed; which is both profitable to be known, and also would not otherwise be believed.

Paul cleareth himself concerning the Jews.

This particle, *in Christ*, is as much as *according to Christ.* Whereas he addeth, *I lie not*, thereby he signifieth that he speaketh without deceit or guile.

My conscience bearing me witness. By these words he calleth his conscience before the judgment of God, because he bringeth in the Spirit to bear witness of his meaning; for to this purpose he hath interposed the name of Spirit, that he might the rather prove how he, being void and clear of all corrupt emulation, did handle the cause of Christ at the direction and moderation of the Spirit of Christ.

Oftentimes it cometh to pass that a man, being blinded with the affection of flesh, (although he deceive not,) yet wittingly and willingly he doth obscure the light of the truth; and this is properly to swear by the name of God, to call him for witness to the confirmation of doubtful matters; and also to bind ourselves to his judgment,[3] if we lie.

What it is to swear by the name of God.

[1] "Nonnihil," somewhat. [2] "Defectionem a Mose," revolt from Moses. [3] "Et simul nos judicio ejus obligare," and at the same time subject ourselves to his condemnation.

Digitized by Google

2. *That I have great heaviness.* It is not without great cunning that he hath so broken off his speech, not as yet showing whereof he spake; for it was not yet time to express plainly the perdition of the people of the Jews. Add, also, that hereby he insinuateth greater vehemency of sorrow, because imperfect speeches, for the most part, do greatly set forth the affections;[1] but straightway he will declare the cause of his sorrow, when he hath more fully testified his sincerity. Furthermore, that the destruction of the Jews, which he knew to come to pass by the will and providence of God, did so greatly grieve him, hereby we are taught, that the obedience which we give to the providence of God letteth not but we may mourn at the fall of wicked men, whereunto yet, nevertheless, we know they were ordained by the just judgment of God; for the same mind may receive this twofold affection, that whilst it respecteth God, it can willingly abide they should perish whom he hath determined to destroy; but when it hath turned its cogitation unto men, it sorroweth at their evil. They, therefore, are far deceived, who require in godly men a senselessness and voidness of affection,[2] lest they should impugn the ordinance of God.

How the godly may mourn even for the destruction of the reprobate.

3. *For I would wish.* He could not express any greater vehemency of love than by protestation or declaration; for this is perfect love, when one refuseth not, yea, even to die for the health of his friend; but the particle that is added doth declare that he speaketh not only of a transitory destruction, but of eternal death. And he alluded unto the signification of *anathema*, when he said *from Christ.* For it is called of (*segregating* or) *separating.* And what is it to be (segregated or) separated from Christ, but to be excluded from all hope of salvation? It was, therefore, an argument of most fervent love, that Paul doubted not to wish that condemnation to himself which he saw to hang over the heads of the Jews, that he might deliver them. Nei-

Anathema, what it meaneth, and how Paul wished it, for [on behalf of] the Jews.

[1] "Quia defectivæ orationes ut plurimum sunt patheticæ," elliptical expressions have, for the most part, a pathos in them. [2] "Ἀπάθειαν καὶ ἀναλγησίαν," apathy and want of feeling.

Digitized by Google

ther letteth it that he knew his salvation was grounded upon the election of God, which can by no means fall away; for these fervent affections, as they are carried headlong, so they respect or consider nothing else but that they tend unto. Therefore, Paul did not join the election of God with his wish, but the remembrance of that being passed by, he was wholly fixed upon the salvation of the Jews.

Now, whereas many doubt whether it were a lawful desire, that doubt may thus be unfolded, namely, that this is the perpetual limit of love, that it may proceed even unto death.[1] So that, then, if we love in God, and not out of God, our love shall never be too much. And such was this of Paul. For while he saw his nation to be indued with so many gifts of God, he loved the gifts of God in them, and them for the gifts' sake; and also was very sorry that these graces should perish. Hence came it that his mind being (as it were) confounded, he burst forth into this extreme wish. So I receive not their opinion who think Paul said these in respect of God only, and not in respect of men. Again, neither do I consent unto those who, without consideration of God, say that Paul gave so much unto the love of men; but I join the love of men with the study of[2] the glory of God. And yet I have not declared that which was the principal, namely, that the Jews are here considered as they are decked with their ornaments, whereby they were distinguished from mankind. For God, by his covenant, had so highly advanced them, that if they fell, the faith and truth of God should fail (or decay) in the world; for the covenant had been void, whose stableness is said to endure so long as the sun and moon shall shine in heaven. So that it were more absurd the same should be abolished, than that the whole world should be turned upside down.

Ps. lxxii. 5.

Wherefore, it is not a simple and bare comparing of men; for although it were better one member should perish than the whole body, yet Paul, therefore, esteemeth the Jews so highly, because he giveth unto them the person and (as they

[1] "Ad aras usque," to the altar even. [2] "Cum studio," with zeal for.

Digitized by Google

commonly say) the quality of elect people. Which thing also appeareth better out of the text,[1] as we shall see straightway in his place.

These words, *I say, my kinsmen according to the flesh*, although they signify no new thing, yet they avail much unto amplification. For, first, lest any should think he doth willingly or voluntarily seek a cause of debate with the Jews, he signifieth that he hath not so put off the sense of humanity, but he is moved at this so horrible a destruction of his own flesh. Again, seeing the gospel, whereof he was a preacher, must needs come forth of Zion, it is not without cause that he doth so largely interfer[2] the commendation of his kindred. For this exception, *according to the flesh*, in my judgment, is not added, as elsewhere, for to extenuate, but rather to cause trust (or confidence.) For although the Jews had rejected Paul, yet he dissembleth not that he was born of that nation in whose root the election yet flourished, though the branches were withered. That which Budæus saith of the word *anathema* is contrary to the sentence of Chrysostom, who maketh ἀνάθεμα and ἀνάθημα all one.

4. *Who are the Israelites.* Here now he plainly showeth the cause why the destruction of the people of the Jews did so greatly grieve him, that he was ready to redeem them with his own destruction; namely, because they were Israelites. For the pronoun relative is put instead of an adverb causal. So this anguish grieved Moses, when he desired that he might be put out of the book of life, that the holy and elect seed of Abraham might not utterly perish. Ex. xxxii. 32. Therefore, besides human affection, he noteth other reasons, and the same also greater, (or weightier,) which ought to make him favour the Jews; namely, that the Lord had so advanced them, as it were, by a certain prerogative, that they were separated from the common sort of men. And these speeches[3] of dignity are testimonies of love; for we use not to speak so favourably, but of those whom we love. And although, through their ingratitude, they made them-

[1] "Contextu," the context.
[2] "Inculcat," dwell upon.
[3] "Elogia," titles.

Digitized by Google

The good gifts of God can never be so defiled by the wicked, but they are always praise-worthy.

selves unworthy, who should be esteemed of, according to these gifts, yet Paul ceaseth not even therefore to reverence them. Whereby he teacheth, that the wicked cannot so defile the good gifts of God, but they are always worthy to be praised and had in admiration; although, unto those [who] do abuse them, there come nothing thereby but the greater obloquy. And as we are not, by hating the wicked, to contemn the gifts of God in them, so, on the contrary, we are to beware, lest by our favourable esteeming and praising of the gifts in them, we puff them up; much more also, that our praises carry not a show of adulation. But let us imitate Paul, who granteth unto the Jews their ornaments in such sort, that afterward he declareth all to be nothing without Christ.

Gen. xlviii. 16.

Finally, he doth not in vain put this amongst their praises, that they were Israelites; for Jacob prayed for that, instead of an excellent blessing, that his name might be called upon over them.

To whom pertaineth the adoption. The whole speech of Paul is directed unto this mark, Howsoever the Jews, by their falling away, have made a wicked divorcement with God, yet is not the light of the grace of God utterly extinguished in them; as he also said in the third chapter. Although they were unbelievers and truce-breakers, yet is not the faith of God made void by their unbelief;[1] not only because he hath reserved out of the whole multitude a remnant unto himself, but because, by the right of inheritance, the name of the church did yet abide with them. And albeit they had now deprived themselves of all these ornaments, so that it profited them nothing to be called the sons of Abraham; yet, because it was dangerous, lest, through their fault, the majesty of the gospel should become vile amongst the Gentiles, Paul considereth not what they deserved, but, with many vails he covereth their filthiness and shame, until the Gentiles were persuaded the gospel came unto them from the celestial fountain, out of the privy chapel of God,[2] out of an elect nation. For the Lord, all other nations being

Rom. iii. 3.

[1] "Perfidia," by their perfidy.

[2] "Sacrario," sanctuary.

Digitized by Google

let pass, had selected them for a peculiar people to himself, and had adopted them for sons, as he often testifieth by Moses and the prophets. And, not content simply to call them sons, sometimes he calleth them his first-begotten, sometimes his darlings. In Exodus the Lord saith thus, "Israel is my first-begotten son. Let my son go, that he may serve me." "I am become a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born." Also, in the same place, "Is not Ephraim my dear son? Is he not my pleasant child? Therefore my bowels are troubled over him, and yet I will have compassion on him." By which words he doth not only set forth his favour towards Israel, but rather showeth the force of adoption under the which the promise of the celestial inheritance is contained. Ex. iv. 22. Jer. xxxi. 9.

Glory signifieth that excellency whereunto the Lord had advanced that people above all other nations; and that both by many and divers other means, and also because he dwelt in the midst of them; for, besides many signs of his presence, he gave a singular testimony thereof in the ark, whence he both gave answers, and also did hear his people, that he might show forth his power in helping them; for which cause it was called the "glory of God." Because here he hath distinguished *covenants* from *promises*, let us note this difference, that we count that a *covenant* which is conceived by plain and solemn words, and hath a mutual promise; namely, the covenant made with Abraham. But promises they be, whichsoever occur here and there in the Scriptures; for, when God had once made his covenant with the old people,[1] he ceased not now and then to offer his grace by new promises. Whereby it followeth, that the promises are referred unto the covenant, as unto their only head; even as the special helps of God, whereby he testifieth his favour towards the faithful, do flow out of the only fountain of election. And because the law was nothing else but a renewing of the covenant, which renewing might the better establish the remembrance thereof, it seemeth that *lawgiving* here, in this place, ought peculiarly to be restrained unto *judgments*; for that also is a singular ornament 1 Sam. iv. 22.

[1] "Vetere populo," with his ancient people.

Digitized by Google

of the people of the Jews, that they had God for their Law-giver. For, if some glory in Solon, and some in Lycurgus,[1] how much more justly may they glory in the Lord? of whom you may read in Deut. iv. By *worship* he understandeth that part of the law wherein the lawful manner of worshipping God is prescribed, as are the rites and ceremonies; for they ought to be esteemed lawful by the rule of God; without the which, whatsoever men devise is but mere profaning of religion.

Deut. iv. 32.

5. *Of whom are the fathers.* For this, also, is of some value, to descend from (the) saints and men beloved of God, seeing God hath promised to the holy fathers mercy towards their children, even unto a thousand generations; and chiefly in the words made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in another place.[2] Neither skilleth it that this by itself is vain and unprofitable, if it be separated from the fear of God and holiness of life. For the same we see, also, in worship and glory; both everywhere in the prophets, and especially in Esay. Howbeit, because God vouchsafeth these, being joined with the study of piety, with some degree of honour he hath worthily reckoned them amongst the prerogatives of the Jews. For therefore are they called the heirs of the promises, because they descended of the fathers.

Gen. xvii. 4.

Isaiah i. 11, and lx. 1.

Acts iii. 25.

Of whom Christ is, &c. They which refer this unto the fathers, as though Paul's mind were only to say that Christ descended of the fathers, they have no reason for it; for his meaning is, by this commendation, namely, that Christ came of them, to knit up the excellency of the people of the Jews. For it is not a thing lightly to be esteemed, namely, to be joined in carnal kindred with the Redeemer of the world. For if he honoured all mankind, when he coupleth himself to us by communicating our nature,[3] much more did he honour them with whom he would have a nearer bond of conjunction. Although it is always so to be taken, that if this blessing of kindred be separated from piety, it is so far

[1] "Solonibus et Lycurgis," in their Solons and Lycurguses. [2] "Et alibi," and elsewhere. [3] "Quum se naturæ communione nobis copulavit," when he connected himself with us by a community of nature.

Digitized by Google

from profiting, that rather it turneth to their greater condemnation. Furthermore, here we have a notable place, that the two natures are so distinguished in Christ, that they are united together into the person of Christ.[1] For whereas he saith, Christ came of the Jews, thereby he declareth his true humanity. Two distinct natures in Christ.

The parcel [words] *according to the flesh*, which is added, doth note that he had somewhat more excellent than flesh; where is a plain distinction between his humanity and divinity. And he joineth both together when he saith, the same Christ, which was born of the Jews according to the flesh, is *God, blessed for ever*. We must also note, that this speech[2] doth not agree unto any other than the only and eternal God. For in another place he preacheth one only God, to whom all honour and glory is due. They who divide this member from the other text,[3] that they might take from Christ so manifest a testimony of his deity, do too impudently go about to make darkness at noonday. For the words are clear enough: *Christ, of the Jews according to the flesh, who is God, blessed for ever*. And I doubt not but Paul, who had a hard fight, and urgent offence,[4] did purposely erect his mind unto the eternal glory of Christ; yea, and that not so much for his own private cause, as that he might encourage others by his example to look up. 1 Tim. i. 17.

6. *And yet not as though the word of God were fallen away. For all they are not Israelites which are of Israel:*
7. *Neither are they all, therefore, children, which are the seed of Abraham: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.*
8. *That is, They are not the children of God which are the children of the flesh: but they which are the children of the promise shall be counted for the seed.*
9. *For this is the word of promise, About this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.*

[1] "Quod ita duæ in Christo naturæ distinguuntur ut simul uniantur in ipsam Christi personam," that though there are two distinct natures in Christ, yet they are united in the person of Christ. [2] "Elogium," title. [3] "A reliquo contextu," from the previous context.—*i. e.*, instead of *Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever*, reading, *Christ came, who is over all. God be blessed for ever!* [4] "Cum urgenti scandalo."

Digitized by Google

6. *And yet not as though, &c.* Because Paul, through the heat of his desire, was carried (as it were) into an excess of mind,[1] now he going about to return unto his parts [task] of teaching, addeth a kind of correction, as though he stayed himself from excessive grief. And because out of that, that he bewailed the destruction of his nation, this absurdity did seem to follow; namely, that the covenant of God made with Abraham was fallen away, (for the grace of God could not fall away from the Israelites, but the covenant should be abolished,) he preventeth this inconvenience in due season; and showeth how in so great cecity [blindness] of the Jews, the grace of God, nevertheless, did abide constantly in that people, whereby the truth of the covenant did stand. Some read, *Neither is it possible*, as though in Greek it were Οὐον τε; but because I find that reading in no copy, I rather allow that which is commonly read, *not that the covenant is fallen away*, to this sense, That I so lament the destruction of my nation, it is not as though I thought the promise of God given to Abraham in old time were now void and abolished.

For not all, &c. The proposition is, the promise was so given to Abraham and to his seed, that his inheritance should not appertain to every one of that seed; whereby it shall fall out, that the falling away of some doth nothing let but the covenant may abide firm and stable. But to the end it may better appear by what condition the Lord adopted the posterity of Abraham for a peculiar people to himself, two things are to be considered here, namely, the promise of salvation given to Abraham, to appertain unto all which take their beginning[2] of him, because it is offered unto all without exception; and that in this respect they are rightly called the heirs and successors of the covenant made with Abraham, or (as the Scripture teacheth) the sons of the promise. For, seeing that God would have his covenant sealed, as well in Ismael and Esau as in Isaac and Jacob, it appeareth they were not altogether altants [aliens] from it; unless, perhaps, you count circumcision nothing,

Two things are to be considered here.

[1] "Extasin," ecstacy.

[2] "Carnis originem," their natural descent.

Digitized by Google

which was communicated to them by the commandment of God; which thing cannot be spoken without the dishonour of God. And that was it [which] the apostle said before, *the covenants* appertained unto them, although they were faithless. And in the Acts they are called the children of the covenants, because they were the offspring of the prophets. The other thing that is to be considered is, that they are properly called the sons of promise in whom the virtue and efficacy thereof appeareth. And in this respect Paul here denieth all the sons of Abraham to be the sons of God, although the covenant of the Lord were made with them; because but few did stand in the faith of the covenant; when yet, notwithstanding, God himself doth testify by Ezechiel, they are all unto him instead of sons. To be brief, when the whole people is called the inheritance, and peculiar people of God, it is meant they are adopted of the Lord, the promise of salvation being offered unto them, and confirmed by the seal of circumcision. But because many of them refuse that adoption by their ingratitude, and therefore enjoy not the benefit thereof, hence ariseth among them another difference, whilst the fulfilling of the promise is respected. Lest, therefore, it should seem wonderful unto any, that that fulfilling of the promise appeareth not in many of the Jews, Paul denieth them to have been comprehended in the true election of God. Or, if any had rather in other words, thus, The general election of the people of Israel letteth not but God, by his secret counsel, may choose out from among them whom he thinketh good. And this is a singular testimony of God's free mercy, that he vouchsafed to make the covenant of life with one nation; but yet his hidden grace aboundeth more in the second election, which is restrained unto a part only. And where he denieth all *to be Israelites that are of Israel, and all to be sons that are of the seed of Abraham*, it is a kind of collusion of words, παρονομα, (which is, when a word is repeated again not altogether the same, but somewhat changed,) seeing in the first member he comprehendeth the whole progeny, in the other he noteth only the true sons, namely, which do not degenerate.

Acts iii. 25.

Ezek. xvi. 20.

Digitized by Google

The secret election of God is not contrary to the external calling.

7. *But, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.* Paul goeth about this that he might show how the secret election of God doth dominate over the external calling, and yet is not contrary to it, but rather tendeth to the confirmation and perfection of it. That he might, therefore, in order declare them both, in the first place, he taketh it as a thing granted, that the election of God is not tied to the carnal generation of Abraham, neither is that contained in the condition of the covenant; which thing he now confirmeth by a fit example. For if there ought to be any natural progeny which should not fall from the covenant, that should chiefly have place in them which did obtain the first degree; but seeing we see, even in the first sons of Abraham, whilst he was yet alive, and the promise yet fresh, that one of the seed of Abraham was separated, (or put apart,) how much more may that come to pass in a long posterity; and this testimony is taken out of Genesis, where the Lord answereth Abraham, that he had heard his prayers touching Ismael; but yet there was another in whom the promised blessing should rest. Whereby it followeth that, by special privilege, some certain men are chosen out of the elect people of God, in whom the common adoption might be effectual and firm.

Gen. xxi. 12.

Heb. xi. 8.

Gen. xvii. 20.

There is a diversity between the carnal sons of Abraham.

8. *That is, they are not.* Now, out of the testimony[1] he gathereth a proposition, wherein his whole purpose is included. For, if in Isaac, and not in Ismael, the seed be called, and yet this was no less the son of Abraham than he, then must not all the carnal sons be reckoned in the seed, but the promise must specially be fulfilled in some, and doth not generally and indifferently belong unto all. He calleth those the *sons of the flesh*, in whom there is nothing more excellent than carnal progeny, as he calleth those the *sons of promise* who are peculiarly sealed of the Lord.[1]

9. *For this is the word of promise.* He addeth another testimony,[2] in the explication[3] whereof we may see with what diligence and dexterity he handleth the Scripture.

[1] "Ex oraculo," out of the inspired testimony. [2] "Oraculum," testimony from Scripture. [3] "Applicatione," application.

Digitized by Google

When the Lord (quoth he) said he would come, and Sara should bear a son to Abraham, thereby he insinuated that his blessing was not yet extant, but was yet to come,[1] howbeit Ismael was now already born when that was spoken; therefore the blessing of God was out of Ismael.[2] And let us, also, by the way note with what circumspection he proceedeth here, lest he should exasperate the Jews. For, first, the cause being suppressed, he doth simply declare the matter; then, secondarily, he openeth the fountain.[3] Gen. xviii. 10.

10. *Neither he only; but Rebecca also, when she had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac:*
11. *For ere the children were born, and when they had neither done good nor evil, (that the purpose of God might remain according to election, not by works, but by him that calleth,*[4])
12. *It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.*
13. *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, and have hated Esau.*

10. *Neither he only.* In this chapter there are certain broken sentences; as this is, *But Rebecca also, which had conceived by one, our father Isaac.* For he endeth in the midst thereof, before he come unto the principal verb. Yet the meaning is, that this diversity, touching the inheritance of the promise, may not only be seen in the sons of Abraham, but also, there is a far more evident example thereof in Jacob and Esau. For, in the former, some might allege the condition was not equal, because one was the son of an handmaid; but these were both of one womb and twins, yet was one rejected, and the other received[5] of the Lord. Whereby appeareth that the fulfilling of the promise doth not indifferently fall out alike in all the sons of the flesh. And because Paul did respect the persons to whom

[1] "Adhuc pendere," was as yet pendent, suspended. [2] "Extra," extrinsic to. [3] "Deinde fontem aperiet," thereafter he will open the fountain, explain the cause. [4] In Calvin's Latin translation there is no parenthesis in the 11th verse, which ends at "election," with a colon, and then the 12th verse begins thus: "Not by works, but by him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder," &c. [5] "Cooptatur," selected.

Digitized by Google

God made his counsel known, I chose rather to understand the masculine pronoun than the neuter, as Erasmus hath done; for the meaning is, that the special election was not only revealed unto Abraham, but also afterward to Rebecca, while she did bear two twins in her womb.

The special election was not only revealed to Abraham, but also to Rebecca.

11. *For ere the children were born.* Now, he beginneth to ascend higher; namely, to show the reason of this diversity, which he teacheth doth not consist in any thing else than the election of God; for hitherto he had touched in few words that there was a difference amongst the carnal sons of Abraham; namely, notwithstanding they were all by circumcision adopted into the fellowship of the covenant, yet the grace of God was not effectual in them all; and that they, therefore, are the sons of the promise who enjoy the benefits of God; but whence that came, he had either not spoken of it, or else he had obscurely insinuated it; but now he doth plainly refer the whole cause unto the election of God, and the same free, and such as doth not depend upon men; that in the salvation of the godly nothing might be sought for above the goodness of God; and in the destruction of the reprobate, nothing above his just severity. Let this, therefore, be the first proposition, As the blessing of the covenant doth separate the people of Israel from all other nations; so also the election of God discerneth the men of that nation, while he predestinateth some unto salvation, and other some unto condemnation. The second proposition is, That there is no other foundation of that election than the mere goodness of God, and also mercy, since the fall of Adam; which mercy (not for any consideration of works at all) embraceth whom it pleaseth. The third proposition, That the Lord in this, his free election, is at liberty and loose from that necessity, that he should indifferently impart the same grace unto all; but rather whom he will he passeth over, and whom he will he chooseth. All these things doth Paul comprise briefly in one sentence; then afterwards he will prosecute the rest.

The first proposition.

The second proposition.

The third proposition.

Finally, in these words, *when they were not yet born,*

Digitized by Google

or had done good or evil, he declareth that God, in putting[1] of a difference, could not have respect to the works, which were not yet. And they which reason to the contrary, saying, that doth not let but the election of God may discern between men, according to their merits, because God doth foresee by the works to come who will be worthy or unworthy of his grace, do not see more than the apostle,[2] but fail in that principle of religion[3] which ought to be very well known to all Christians; namely, that God could see nothing in the corrupt nature of man, such as was in Esau and Jacob, whereby he might be moved to do good. Therefore, when he saith, that both of them had then done neither good nor evil, it is also to be added, which he presumeth, namely, that both of them were the sons of Adam, by nature sinners, indued with no crumb of righteousness.[4] Neither do I therefore stand so long in expounding these, as though the mind of the apostle were doubtful; but because the sophisters not being content with the simplicity thereof, go about by their frivolous distinctions to creep out hence,[5] my meaning was to show, that Paul was not ignorant of those things they bring, but that they rather are blind in the first principles of religion. Moreover, although the corruption of nature, which is dispersed over all mankind, before it come (as they say) into action, is available enough unto condemnation, whereby followeth that Esau was worthily rejected, because naturally he was the son of wrath; yet, lest any doubt should remain, as though, through respect of any fault or sin, his condition was the worse, it was necessary [that] as well sins as virtues should be excluded. Surely true it is that the next[6] cause of reprobation is, for that we are all accursed in Adam; yet to the end we might learn to rest in the bare and simple will of God, Paul did lead us aside from the consideration thereof for so long until he had established this doctrine, namely,

[1] "Statuenda discrimine," in making a difference. [2] "Non sunt Paulo magis perspicaces," are not more clear-sighted than Paul. [3] "Sed in principio theologiæ impingunt," stumble at a first principle of theology. [4] "Nulla justitiæ mica," with not a particle of righteousness. [5] "Elabi hinc," to evade it. [6] "Propinquam," the proper, or proximate.

Digitized by Google

that God hath a sufficient just cause of election and reprobation in his own will or pleasure.

That the purpose of God, &c. Almost in every word he urgeth the free election of God; for if works had place, he should have said, that the reward of God might stand by works. But he opposeth the purpose of God, which is contained (that I might say so) in his only pleasure. And lest there should remain any doubt thereof, by adding the other parcel,[1] *according to election*, he hath removed all doubt. And then, the third clause, *not of works, but of the caller*. Now then, let us apply our minds more nearly unto this text.[2] If the purpose of God, according to election, be thereby established, that before the brethren were born, and had done either good or evil, the one is rejected, the other is chosen; then, if any would go about to attribute to their works the cause of difference, the purpose of God should so be overthrown.

Now, whereas he addeth, *not of works, but of the caller*, he signifieth, not of the behalf of works, but of calling only; for he goeth about to exclude all consideration of works. Wherefore, we have all the stableness of our election concluded in the only purpose of God;[3] merits are worth nothing here, which serve for nothing but unto death; no dignity is regarded, for there is none; but the only goodness of God reigneth. And therefore that doctrine is false, and contrary to the word of God; namely, that God doth choose or reject, as he foreseeth every man worthy or unworthy of his grace.

Our election is grounded only upon the goodness of God.

12. *The elder shall serve the younger.* Behold how the Lord putteth a difference between the sons of Isaac, yet being in their mother's womb; for this is the answer of the Heavenly oracle, whereby it followeth, that his pleasure was to show unto the younger special favour which he denied unto the elder. And although this did appertain unto the

[1] "Particula," clause. [2] "Ejus contextum," his context.

[3] "Habemus ergo totam electionis nostræ firmitudinem in solo Dei proposito esse conclusam," the whole security of our election depends on the mere purpose of God.

Digitized by Google

law of birthright,[1] yet therein, as in the type of a greater matter, was the will of God declared. And that may easily be seen, if we do consider how little, according to the flesh, the birthright profited Jacob. For therefore he was both in great danger, and also, for the avoiding of that danger, he was forced to flee from his house and country, and was uncourteously intreated in exilement; and when he returned, trembling, and doubtful of life, he prostrateth himself at the feet of his brother, humbly he beseecheth him to forgive him his offence, and doth not live but by his pardon. Where is his lordship over his brother, of whom he is constrained by prayer to ask life? Therefore, there was some greater matter than the birthright which the Lord promised by his oracle.

When the Lord called Jacob to that birthright [which] was due by the order of nature to Esau, thereby he gave a type of another matter.

13. *As it is written.* Yet he confirmeth, by a surer testimony, how greatly that oracle given to Rebecca did avail to the present cause; namely, that by the lordship of Jacob and bondage of Esau the spiritual condition of them both was testified; secondly, that Jacob obtained this grace by the goodness of God, and no merit of his. Therefore, this testimony of the prophet declareth why the Lord gave unto Jacob the birthright. And it is taken out of Malachi, where the Lord, upbraiding the unthankfulness of the Jews, first maketh mention of his goodness towards them. *I have loved you,* (quoth he;) and he addeth whence the beginning of love proceeded, *Was not Esau the brother of Jacob?* As though he said, What prerogative had he, why I should prefer him before his brother? None at all. For there was an equal right, saving that, by the law of nature, this which was the younger ought to have been subject to him that was the elder; yet have I chosen him, and refused this,[2] being moved thereunto by my mercy only, and by no dignity of works. And now I have adopted you to be my people, that I might still prosecute the same love towards the seed of Jacob; but I have rejected the Edomites, the progeny of Esau. Therefore, ye are so much the worse, whom the remembrance of so great favour cannot provoke

Malachi i. 2.

[1] "Primogenituræ," of primogeniture. [2] "Hunc assumpsi, illum repuli," have chosen the one, and rejected the other.

Digitized by Google

to the worship of my Majesty. And although the earthly blessings are there also mentioned which God bestowed upon the Israelites, yet we must not otherwise take them than pledges of his benevolence: for where the wrath of God is, there followeth death; but where his love is, there followeth life.

14. *What shall we say, then? Is there any unrighteousness with God? God forbid.*
15. *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.*
16. *So then, it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy.*
17. *For the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, For this same purpose have I stirred thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*
18. *Therefore, he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

14. *What shall we say, then?* Flesh cannot hear that wisdom of God but straightway it is troubled with tumultuous questions, and in a sort striveth to bring God to account. Therefore, we see the apostle, so often as he handleth any high mystery, answereth many inconveniences[1] wherewithal he knew the minds of men otherwise to be occupied. And chiefly when men hear that of predestination, which the Scripture delivereth, they are tangled with many trifles. For the predestination of God is truly a labyrinth, whence the wit of man can no way unwind itself; but such is the importunate curiosity of man, that the more dangerous the inquisition of any thing is, the more boldly he rusheth thither: so when talk is of predestination, because he cannot bridle himself, by his rashness he doth straightway (as it were) drown himself in the depth of the sea. What remedy, then, have the godly? Should they flee all remembrance of predestination? No, not so. For seeing the Holy Ghost hath taught nothing but that which is necessary for us to

Predestination is not, therefore, utterly to be neglected, because it is a hard and dangerous question.

[1] "Absurdis," absurdities.

Digitized by Google

know, assuredly the knowledge thereof shall be profitable, if it keep itself within the Word of God. Let this, then, be a sure observation with us, that we seek to know nothing of it but that [which] the Scripture teacheth; where the Lord shutteth his holy mouth, let us also stop the way to our minds of going further. But because we are men into whose minds those foolish questions do naturally come, let us hear of Paul how we may meet with them.[1]

Is there any unrighteousness with God? This is a monstrous fury of man's wit, that rather it chargeth God of unrighteousness, than it will reprove itself of cecity.[2] Neither would Paul fetch things[3] far off wherewith he might trouble the readers; but (as it were) he taketh away that wicked doubt, which straightway creepeth in upon many, so soon as they hear that God doth determine of every one according to his pleasure. Furthermore, this is that kind of unrighteousness which flesh imagineth, that, one being neglected, God hath respect unto another. That Paul might loose this knot, he divided the whole clause into two members; in the former whereof he intreateth of the elect; in the other of the reprobate; and his will is, that in those we consider the mercy of God, but in these we acknowledge the just judgment of God. First of all, therefore, he answereth, that this cogitation is execrable, that unrighteousness should be thought to be with God; then, secondly, he declareth, on both sides, how there can be none. Yet, before we go farther, this objection testifieth clearly, that God hath elected some, and rejected other some; and the cause is nowhere else to be sought for than in his purpose. For if the difference were grounded upon the respect of works, in vain had Paul moved [the] question of the unrighteousness of God, whereof there could be no suspicion, if he handled every one according to his desert. Now, this also is to be noted in this second place, that although he saw this part of doctrine could not be touched, but murmuring speeches, and also horrible blas-

[1] "Occurrendum," obviate. [2] "Cæcitatis," blindness.

[3] "Nec Paulus procul accersere voluit," would Paul not go out of his way to find out things.

Digitized by Google

phemies, would straightway arise against it, yet frankly and freely he doth denounce it; yea, he dissembleth not what occasion of storming and murmuring there is offered unto us, whilst we hear that, before men are born, every one hath his lot appointed by the secret counsel of God; yet, nevertheless, he goeth on, and without doubting he denounceth[1] that which he had learned of the Holy Spirit. Whereby it followeth, that their niceness is intolerable, who seek to be wiser in redeeming and pacifying offences than the Holy Ghost. Lest God should be charged with any fault, they make religion of the matter, simply to say, that the salvation and destruction of men doth depend of [on] his free election. If they restrained their minds from wicked curiosity, and also bridled their tongues from too much lavishing, their modesty and sobriety were to be allowed of;[2] but what boldness is this, to bridle the Holy Ghost and Paul? Let this magnanimity, therefore, flourish in the Church of God, that the true teachers be not ashamed of the simple profession of true doctrine, howsoever it be hated, and to refute whatsoever reproaches the wicked thrust in.

15. *For he saith to Moses.* Touching the elect God cannot be charged with any unrighteousness; for he vouchsafeth them of mercy according to his good pleasure. And yet, here also, the flesh findeth somewhat to murmur (or complain,) because it cannot yield this unto God, that he should vouchsafe one with favour rather than another, unless the cause appear forth. Because, therefore, it seemeth absurd that some should be preferred before others without desert, the frowardness of men maketh war with God, as though he gave unto the persons more than equity. Now, let us see how Paul defendeth the righteousness of God. First, he obscureth not, neither hideth, that which he saw to be odious; but in maintaining thereof he proceedeth with immutable[3] constancy. Secondly, he laboureth not to find out reasons to mollify the asperity; but he counteth it sufficient by the

[1] "Sine ambagibus pronunciat," declares without circumlocution.
[2] "Probanda," approved. [3] "Inflexibili," inflexible.

Digitized by Google

testimonies of Scripture to restrain impure barkings. This might seem to be a cold excuse, that God is not unjust, because he is merciful to whom he will; but because unto God his own only authority is sufficient, so that he standeth in no need of the defence of any other, it was sufficient unto Paul that he was appointed a defender of his own right. And Paul bringeth here the answer which Moses received of the Lord, when he prayed for the health of the whole people. "I will have mercy (saith the Lord) on whom I will have mercy; and I will show compassion to whom I will show compassion." By this oracle the Lord declared how he is debtor to no man; and that it is of his free goodness whatsoever he giveth unto them. Secondly, that this beneficency is free, that he may bestow it upon whom he will. Lastly, that no cause can be imagined above his will why he doth good unto certain men, and willeth them well, not unto all,[1] his words are as much as if it were said, Look, upon whom I have once determined to have mercy I will never take my mercy from him; and I will for ever show bountifulness unto him to whom I have determined to be bountiful. And so he noteth the highest cause of bestowing grace; namely, his voluntary decree; and withal he insinuateth that he hath appointed his mercy peculiarly for certain. For both this short speech excludeth all foreign causes; as when we, challenging to ourselves free power of doing, we say, I will do what I will do. And also, the pronoun relative expresseth plainly, that mercy is not indifferently for all. This liberty is taken from God, if his election be tied to external causes. In two words which Moses useth, the only cause of salvation is expressed; for חנן (*chanan,*) is to favour, or give a benefit freely and liberally; but רחם (*racham,*) is to show mercy. So that is brought to pass that Paul intendeth; namely, that the mercy of God, because it is free, is not tied, but he may show it where he lists.

Ex. xxxiii. 15.

16. *So then, it is not, &c.* By that testimony he gather-

[1] "Non autem omnibus," but not all.

eth that, without all controversy, it followeth the election of God is not to be attributed to our industry, or study, or endeavour, but is wholly to be referred unto the counsel of God. Lest any should think that they who are chosen are, therefore, chosen because they did deserve it, or had won unto themselves the favour of God by any means; or, finally, because there was in them any crumb of dignity or worthiness, whereby the Lord might be provoked, understand it simply, that it standeth not in our will or study (for he hath put *course* for *study*) that we should be numbered amongst the elect; but that standeth wholly on the goodness of God, which chooseth those freely that neither will nor study, no, nor think of it. And they who reason out of this place that there is in us some force or virtue of study, but which can do nothing by itself except it be helped by the mercy of God, they do it foolishly. For the apostle doth not show what is in us, but excludeth all our endeavours. It is, therefore, a mere cavillation that they bring in; namely, that we will and run because Paul denieth it to be in the willer or runner; seeing his mind is nothing else than that neither will or running doth any thing.

Yet they are again to be reproved, who, to the end they might give place to the grace of God, abide secure and idle. For although we profit nothing by our own study, yet that study which is inspired of God is not ineffectual. These things are not, therefore, said, that we should, by our waywardness or slothfulness, choke the Spirit of God infusing his sparks into us, but that we should understand it is of him whatsoever we have; and, therefore, let us learn both to ask all things of him, to hope for all things, and to ascribe all things to him; and also with fear and trembling to seek our salvation. Pelagius hath gone about by another sophistical, but a filthy or rotten cavillation, to abuse[1] the sentence of Paul; namely, that it is not the willer or runner only, because the grace of God helpeth; whom Augustine hath not only soundly, but wittily refuted. For if the will

[1] "Eludere," to evade.

Digitized by Google

of man be, therefore, denied to be the cause of election, because it is not the only cause, but in part, then thus it may be said again, that it is not of mercy, but of the willer and runner; for where there is a mutual working there shall also be a mutual praise. But assuredly this last saying doth fall with the weight of its own absurdity. Let us, therefore, determine, that the salvation of those whom it pleaseth God to save is so ascribed unto the mercy of God, that nothing is left unto the industry of man. Neither hath it much more colour, that some would have those recited together in the person of the wicked; for how shall it hang together to wrest those places of Scripture where the righteousness of God is defended, to upbraid him with tyranny? Again, is it like, seeing the refutation was ready and easy, that Paul, without speech, would suffer the Scripture to be so grossly abused? But these starting holes they have sought who did measure this incomparable mystery of God by their own sense. It was a rougher doctrine for their dainty and tender ears than that they could think it meet for an apostle. But they ought rather to have bent their own stiffneckedness to the obsequy[1] of the Spirit, that they might not have been so much addicted to their own gross imaginations.

The salvation of the elect standeth wholly and only upon the mercy of God.

17. *For the Scripture saith, &c.* Now he cometh unto the second member, of the rejection of the wicked; wherein, because there seemeth to be somewhat more absurdity, so much the more diligently he goeth about to make manifest how God, in rejecting whom he will, is not only irreprehensible, (or without blame,) but also wonderful in his wisdom and equity. He therefore taketh his testimony out of Exodus; where the Lord saith it was he that stirred up Pharaoh to that end, that whilst he went about stubbornly to resist the power of God, he, being overcome and subdued, might be for an example how invincible the arm of God is; to the bearing whereof, much less to the breaking whereof, no human strength is sufficient. Behold the pattern that the

Ex. ix. 16.

[1] "Obsequiem," obedience.

Digitized by Google

Two things to be considered in Pharaoh.

Lord would show to [in] Pharaoh! Wherefore, two things are to be considered here: The predestination of Pharaoh to destruction; which is verily referred unto the just but yet secret counsel of God.

Secondly, The end whereof, which is, that the name of God might be celebrated; and to that end doth Paul chiefly stay upon it. For, if this hardening be such, for the which the name of God deserveth to be declared, that he should be charged with unrighteousness is abomination. It is an argument taken from the places of contraries. But because many interpreters, while they go about to qualify this place, also they do corrupt it, first, it is to be noted, that for the word *stirred up*, in Hebrew it is, *I have ordained thee;* where the Lord, going about to declare that the stubbornness of Pharaoh was no let to him, that he might not deliver his people, affirmeth that his fury was not only foreseen of him, and that he had means prepared to bridle it, but also that he had purposely so ordained it, and verily to the end that he might show forth a more evident testimony of his power. Some, therefore, do turn it amiss, namely, that Pharaoh was reserved to a time, seeing rather he speaketh of the beginning. For, seeing many things elsewhere occur unto men, which hinder their counsels, and let the course of their actions, God saith Pharaoh came from him, and that this person was laid upon him; unto which sentence the word *raise*, or *stir up*, notably agreeth. Finally, lest any should imagine that Pharaoh was moved from above, by a certain and universal confused motion, that he might rush into that fury, the special cause or end is noted; as if it were said, that God did not only know what Pharaoh would do, but also purposely appointed him to this use. Whereby it followeth that it is in vain now to strive with him, as though he were bound to give a reason or account, seeing he doth willingly come forth himself, and preventeth[1] this objection, denouncing that the reprobate, in whom he will have his name celebrated, come from the secret fountain of his providence.

[1] "Anticipet," anticipates.

Digitized by Google

18. *Therefore, he hath mercy on whom he will.* Here followeth the conclusion of both members; which cannot any way be understood in the person of any other than of the apostle; because straightway he addeth a communication with the adversary, when he beginneth to bring forth such things as may be objected of the contrary part. Therefore, it is not to be doubted but Paul speaketh these of his own sense, as we have admonished a little before, namely, that God, according to his pleasure, vouchsafeth whom he seeth good of mercy, and draweth forth the severity of judgment against whom he lists. For this he goeth about to bring to pass amongst us, that concerning the diversity [that] is between the elect and reprobate, our mind might be content with this, namely, that it hath so pleased God to illuminate some unto salvation, and blind other some unto death; and not seek for any cause above his will. For we must stand upon these particles, *of whom he will, and whom he will,* beyond the which he doth not suffer us to pass. But the word *harden,* when in the Scriptures it is attributed to God, it doth not only signify (as certain tempering moderaters would have it) a permission or suffering, but also the action of God's wrath. For all external things which make to the excecation[1] of the reprobate are the instruments of his wrath; and Satan himself, which inwardly worketh effectually, is so far forth his minister that he worketh not but at his commandment. To harden, how it is taken.

Therefore, that frivolous evasion or refuge, which the schoolmen have of foreknowledge, doth fall down. For Paul doth not only say, that the ruin of the wicked is foreseen of the Lord, but is ordained by his counsel and will; as Solomon also teacheth, that the destruction of the wicked was not only foreknown, but that the wicked ones themselves were purposely created that they might perish. Prov. xvi. 4.

19. *Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet complain? who hath resisted his will?*

20. *But, O man, what art thou that pleadest (or shouldest plead) in*

[1] "Excæcationem," blinding.

Digitized by Google

judgment with God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me so?

21. *Hath not the potter power of the clay, to make of the same lump one vessel to honour, and another vessel to dishonour?*

19. *Thou wilt say then unto me.* Here especially the flesh stormeth, when it heareth how it is referred unto the will of God, that they are destined unto death which perish. Wherefore, the apostle descendeth again unto objections, by taking to him the speech of the adversary; because he saw the mouths of the wicked could not be stopped, but with full mouths they would bark against the righteousness of God. And he doth notably express their affection. For they, not being content to defend themselves, make God guilty in their stead; and then, after they have turned the fault of their condemnation upon him, they are grieved[1] at his so great power. Indeed, they are constrained to yield, but storming, because they cannot resist; and attributing to him the principality, they do in a manner charge him of [with] tyranny, much like as sophisters in their schools do in such sort babble of his absolute (as they call it) righteousness, as though he, having forgotten his righteousness, would make a trial of the might of his Lordship,[2] by mixing all things perversely. Thus, therefore, do the wicked reason in this place, "What cause hath he why he should be angry at us? seeing he made us such, seeing he leadeth us whither he listeth at his pleasure; what else doth he in destroying us but revenge his own work in us? Neither is it our part to contend with him; and howsoever we strive he will have the upper hand. Therefore, both his judgment shall be unjust if he condemn us; and also his power, which he abuseth now against us, is licentious." But what doth Paul answer to these?

20. *What art thou, O thou man?* Because in Greek there is the participle, it may also be read in the present tense,

[1] "Indignantur," they are indignant. [2] "Vim sui imperii," of the extent of his power.

Digitized by Google

which dost strive, or *contend*, or *fightest on the contrary*; because this is expressed in the Greek word to this sense, *Who art thou that takest upon thee to contend with God?* but the sense is not much diverse. By this first answer he doth nothing else than repress the wickedness of that blasphemy, by an argument taken from the condition of man. He will straightway add another, whereby he will clear the righteousness of God from all accusation. The first answer.

This, verily, is apparent, that no cause is brought above the will of God. Seeing the answer was at hand, namely, that the difference doth depend upon just causes, why did not Paul use this compendious or short form, but placed the will of God in the highest degree, that it only might suffice us for all causes? Assuredly, if the objection had been false, that God doth reject or elect according to his pleasure, whom he either vouchsafeth not with favour, or whom he loveth freely, the refutation had not been neglected of Paul. The wicked object, that men are cleared from guiltiness, if the will of God bear the chiefest sway in their salvation and destruction. Doth Paul deny it? Yea, by his answer he confirmeth, namely, that God doth decree or determine of men as it pleaseth him; yet in vain and madly do men rise up to contend, because God, by his right, power, or authority, assigneth to his works what lot he will. And they who say that Paul, wanting reason, did flee unto brawling (or chiding,) charge the Holy Ghost with great reproach. For he would not at the first bring forth those things which might make to the defence of the equity of God, and which he had in a readiness, because they could not be conceived or apprehended. Yea, he also so tempereth the second reason, that he doth not undertake a full defence; but yet so that he declareth or showeth forth the righteousness of God, if it be with devout humility and reverence weighed of us. That, therefore, which was most meet, he admonisheth man of his condition; as if he said, Seeing thou art a man, thou must acknowledge thyself earth and ashes; why, then, dost thou contend with the Lord about a matter which thou canst not understand? To be brief, the apostle hath not brought that [which] could be said, but that [which] was expedient for our

Digitized by Google

rudeness. Proud men storm that Paul, not denying men to be rejected or elected by the secret counsel of God, allegeth no cause, as though the Spirit of God, wanting reason, held his peace; and not rather by his silence did admonish that the mystery, which the minds of men do not comprehend, is reverently to be had in admiration, and so might bridle the waywardness of man's curiosity. Let us know, therefore, that God doth not for any other end cease from speaking, but because he seeth his infinite wisdom cannot be comprehended by our slender capacity; and, therefore, sparing our infirmity, provoketh us unto sobriety and modesty.

The will of God is always just, howsoever we see not the reason of it.

Shall the thing formed. We see that Paul hitherto doth always stand upon this, namely, that the will of God, although the reason thereof is unknown to us, is to be counted just; for he showeth that the Lord hath his right taken from him, if he be not at liberty to do with his creatures what he lists.[1] This seemeth hard to the ears of many. And there are also some who allege that God is put to great reproach if such liberty be given unto him, as though they, with their disdainfulness, were better divines than Paul, who hath appointed this rule of humility to the faithful, that they should wonder at[2] the power of God, and not esteem it after their own judgment. And he represseth this arrogancy of striving with God, by a most fit similitude, wherein he seemeth rather to have alluded unto Isaiah than Jeremiah; for nothing else is taught with Jeremiah than that Israel is in the hand of the Lord, so that for his sins he may break him in pieces, as a potter may his earthen vessel; but Isaiah goeth higher, saying, "Woe be to him that gainsayeth his Maker;" namely, to the pot that striveth with the potter. "Shall the clay say to his potter, What makest thou?" &c. And surely there is no cause why mortal man should prefer himself before an earthen vessel, when he compareth himself with God. Neither are we to be very curious in applying that testimony to the present cause, seeing the mind of the apostle was only to allude unto the words

Isaiah v. 1x.

Jer. xviii. 6.

[1] "Quod visum est," what he sees meet. [2] "Suspiciant," look up to.

Digitized by Google

of the prophet, that his similitude might have the more weight.

21. *Hath not the potter authority.* The reason why the thing formed ought not to strive with his former is, because the maker doth nothing but by his right (or authority.) By the word *power* he understandeth not that he hath strength and force to do with his vessel what he lists; but that (this pre-eminence or) authority doth agree unto him by good right; for his mind is not to give unto God any licentious power, but such as is worthily given unto him.

Furthermore, in applying the similitude, consider this, as the potter doth take nothing from the clay, what form soever he give it, so to what condition soever God create a man, he taketh nothing from him; only that is to be remembered, namely, that God is partly robbed of his honour, unless such authority be given unto him over men that he may be judge of life and death.

22. *What and if God would, to show his wrath, and to make his power known, suffer with long patience the vessels of wrath prepared to destruction:*
23. *That he might also declare the riches of his glory upon the vessels of mercy, which he hath prepared unto glory.*

22. *What and if.* The second answer, wherein he doth briefly declare, although the counsel of God be incomprehensible on this part, yet it is apparent his equity is unblameable,[1] no less in the destruction of the reprobate, than in the salvation of the elect. He doth not give a reason of the election of God in such sort as though he would assign the cause why this man is chosen, and that rejected; for both it was unmeet that those things which are contained in the secret counsel of God should come under the censure of man, and also that mystery was unfoldable;[2] therefore, he restraineth us from examining those things curiously which exceed the capacity of man. In the meanwhile, he showeth

The second answer.

[1] "Elucere tamen inculpatum ejus æquitatem," yet his unblemished equity is conspicuous. [2] "Inexplicabile," inexplicable.

Digitized by Google

that so far forth as the predestination of God doth show forth itself, therein appeareth true righteousness. I take the particle εἰδὲ, which Paul useth, as though it were said, *what and if*, that this whole sentence may be interrogative; for so the meaning shall be more apparent; and it shall be a kind of silence,[1] (or concealing,) wherein must be understood, Who, therefore, can accuse him of unrighteousness, or appoint him a day to plead? For here appeareth nothing but the most straight rule of righteousness. But if we will understand the mind of Paul, every word almost is to be examined; for thus he reasoneth, There are vessels prepared for destruction, that is, bequeathed and destinated to destruction; there are also vessels of wrath, that is, made and formed to this end, that they might be testimonies of the vengeance and wrath of God. Now, if God patiently suffer those for some time, not destroying them at the first moment, but deferring the judgment prepared for them, and that to show forth the testimonies of his severity, that others might be terrified by so horrible examples; and also to set forth his power, whereunto he maketh them diversely to serve; and, lastly, that thereby the greatness of his mercy towards the elect might be better known, and more clearly appear, what is worthy to be reprehended in this dispensation? Howbeit it is no marvel, though he show not whence it is that they are vessels prepared for destruction; for out of that which is gone before he taketh it to be a sure thing that the cause is hid in the eternal and unsearchable counsel of God, the righteousness whereof we ought rather to worship than to search after.[2] And he hath put vessels in a general signification for instruments. For whatsoever action there is in any creature, it is (as a man would say) the ministry of the power of God. Very fitly, therefore, are we the faithful called vessels of mercy, which the Lord doth use as instruments to show forth his mercy; and the reprobate the vessels of wrath, seeing they serve to show forth the judgments of God.

[1] "Reticentiæ species," a kind of reticence or ellipsis. [2] "Scrutare," to scrutinise or pry into.

Digitized by Google

23. *That he might also declare the riches.* Because I doubted not but in these two particles, *καὶ ἵνα, and that*, there was a displacing of words, that being in the first place [which] should be in the last; to the end this member might the better agree with the former, I have translated it, *That he might also declare.* And it is the second reason which manifesteth the glory of God in the destruction of the reprobate, because thereby the greatness of the goodness of God towards the elect is more largely confirmed. For what do these differ from those, but that they are delivered from the same gulf of destruction by the Lord; and that by no desert of their own, but of his free goodness. Therefore, it cannot otherwise be but that [the] infinite goodness of God towards the elect should be commended more and more, when we consider how miserable all they are who do not escape his wrath. I interpret the word *glory*, which is twice repeated here, to be put for *the mercy of God*, by the figure *metonymia*, (which is here by putting the effect for the cause;) for his chiefest praise consisteth in doing good. So, to the Ephesians, after he hath taught how we are adopted of God, to the praise of the glory of his grace, shortly after he addeth, that we are sealed by the Spirit of inheritance to the praise of his glory, the word *grace* being left out. His meaning, therefore, is to signify that the elect are instruments or vessels whereby God doth exercise his mercy, that he might glorify his name in them.

By the destruction of the reprobate God's mercy towards the elect is made more manifest.

Eph. i. 13.

And although in this second member he doth more expressly affirm that it is God who prepareth his elect unto glory, when as before he had simply said that the reprobate are vessels prepared unto destruction; yet there is no doubt but the preparation of them both doth depend upon the secret counsel of God. Otherwise Paul had said, the reprobate give or cast themselves into destruction; but now he giveth to wit, that before they are born they are already addicted to their lot.

24. *Whom he hath also called; namely us, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles;*

25. *As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people,*

Digitized by Google

which were not my people ; and her beloved, which was not beloved ;

26. *And it shall be in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, that there they shall be called the children of the living God.*

27. *And Esay crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel were as the sand of the sea, yet shall but a remnant be saved :*

28. *For he maketh his account short, and gathereth it into a brief sum in righteousness : because the Lord will make a short account in the earth.*

29. *And as Esay had said before, Except the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we had been made as Sodom, and had been like to Gomorrha.*

24. *Whom he hath also called.* Out of that disputation which he hath hitherto had of the liberty of God's election, two things followed; namely, that the grace of God is not so included within the people of the Jews that it cannot also flow forth unto other nations, and spread itself over the whole world. Secondly, that it is not so tied to the Jews, that it must needs come unto all the sons of Abraham, according to the flesh, without exception. For if the election of God be grounded upon his pleasure only, whithersoever his will shall turn itself, there also the election of God hath place. Election, therefore, being put down, now the way, in a manner, is made unto those things which he hath purposed to say, as well of the calling of the Gentiles as the rejection of the Jews; the one whereof, for novelty, did seem absurd, the other altogether unmeet or unworthy. Yet, because this latter had more offence in it, he handleth the other, being less odious, in the first place. He saith, therefore, that the vessels of God's mercy, which he chooseth unto the glory of his name, are taken everywhere, no less from among the Gentiles than the Jews. But in the relative *whom*, although the reason of grammar be not observed by Paul, yet his meaning is, (a passage, as it were, being made,) to add, that we are those vessels of God's glory who are partly taken out from amongst the Jews, and partly from amongst the Gentiles. Where, by an argument taken

Digitized by Google

from the vocation of God, he proveth there is no difference of nation in election. For if pedigree taken from the Gentiles was no impediment why God should not also call us, it is apparent the Gentiles are not banished from the kingdom of God and the covenant of eternal salvation.

25. *As he saith also in Osee.* Now he declareth that the calling of the Gentiles ought not to seem new, as which was testified long before by the oracle of the prophet. The sense is plain enough, but that there is somewhat to do for applying the testimony; for none will deny but the prophet speaketh there of the Israelites. For the Lord being offended at their wickedness, denounceth [that] they should no more afterwards be his people. After that he addeth a consolation, and of not beloved, maketh them beloved, of not a people, a people. And Paul goeth about to apply that unto the Gentiles which is precisely spoken unto the Israelites.

They who hitherto have best unfolded this knot have thought that Paul would reason thus: "That which might be supposed an impediment to the Gentiles, to hinder them from being partakers of salvation, was also in the people of Israel; as God, therefore, in old time did graciously receive the Jews into favour, whom he had cast off and banished, even so now he useth the same bountifulness towards the Gentiles." But because that interpretation, although it may be suffered, yet seemeth unto me to be somewhat forced, let the readers consider whether this be not more apt, if we do believe the consolation of the prophet was not given to the Jews only, but also to the Gentiles.

For it is no new or strange thing among the prophets, after they have published the vengeance of God against the Jews for their iniquities, to turn themselves unto the kingdom of Christ, which was to be dispersed over the whole world. Neither did they that without reason. For seeing the Jews, by their sins, did so provoke the wrath of God that they deserved to be divorced from him, there remaineth no hope of salvation unless they turn themselves unto Christ, by whom the covenant of grace is restored; and as it was founded in him, so now

Digitized by Google

by his intercession it is renewed. And, assuredly, seeing Christ is the only refuge in desperate affairs, (or such as are past all hope,) no sound consolation can be brought unto miserable sinners, and such as see the wrath of God hang over them, but by setting Christ before their eyes. Yea, this (as we have admonished) is ordinary amongst the prophets, when they have humbled the people, being pricked with the threatening of God's vengeance, to recall them unto Christ, the only sanctuary of those [who] have no other refuge. And where the kingdom of Christ is erected, there also that heavenly Jerusalem is raised up, into which the citizens out of all parts of the world are gathered. And that chiefly availeth in the present oracle; for when the Jews were cast out of the family of God, by that means they were brought into a vulgar or common estate, and were made like unto the Gentiles. After the difference is taken away, now the mercy of God hath place indifferently amongst all nations.[1]

Whereby we gather, that the testimony of the prophet is fitly applied unto the present cause. Wherein God, after he hath matched the Jews with the Gentiles, pronounceth that he will gather a church of them both,[2] that they which were no people might begin to be.

I will call them my people which is not my people. This is said in respect of the divorcement which God had now made with the people, depriving them of all dignity, that they should not excel the foreign[3] nations. And although they whom God hath ordained for sons unto himself in his eternal counsel, these are, and are for ever, sons, yet the Scripture many times reckoneth not [none] among the sons of God but [those] whose election is confirmed by calling; whereby also he teacheth us not to judge, and much less to denounce of[4] the election of God, but so far forth as it manifesteth itself by his [its] tokens. So likewise, after that Paul had shown unto the Ephesians, that their election and adoption was deter-

How far we may denounce of the election of God.

[1] "Jam Dei misericordia in omnibus Gentibus promiscue locum habet," the mercy of God now extends indiscriminately to all the Gentiles.

[2] "Ex alienis," from among strangers. [3] "Cæteris," other.

[4] "Pronunciare de," pronounce on.

Digitized by Google

mined with God before the creation of the world, a little after he testifieth they were sometimes strangers from God; namely, according to that time wherein the Lord had not yet declared his love towards them, although he had embraced them with eternal mercy. Therefore, in this place they are called *not beloved*, to whom the Lord rather testifieth his wrath than love. Finally, until adoption reconcile men unto God, we know his wrath lieth upon all mankind. The feminine gender of the participle dependeth upon the text of the prophet; for he had said that a daughter was born unto him, whom he called *not beloved;* that, under this type, the people might know they were hated of God. Now, as rejection was the cause of hatred, so the prophet teacheth that the beginning of love is when God doth adopt them who for a time were foreigners.

27. *And Esay crieth.* Now he cometh unto the second part, whereat he would not begin, lest he should exasperate their minds too much. And this is not without skill, that he bringeth in the prophet Esay *crying*, and not speaking; namely, that he might make them more attentive.

Furthermore, the words of the prophet are plain, to fear[1] the Jews, lest they should glory too much in the flesh; for it is horrible to be heard, that of such an infinite multitude a small number only should be saved. For although the prophet, after he had described the destruction of the people, lest the faithful should think the covenant of God were utterly wiped out, putteth them in mind there is some hope[2] of grace remaining; yet he restrained that unto a few. But because the prophet prophesied that of his time, we are to see how Paul doth rightly apply it to his purpose. And thus it ought to be applied, When the Lord would deliver his people out of the captivity of Babylon, he would [that] the benefit of his deliverance should come unto a very few of so great a multitude; which might justly be called the remnant of that destruction, in respect of the multitude of people which he suffered to perish in exilement. Now, that same

[1] "Ad deterrendos," to alarm. [2] "Residuam," residue.

Digitized by Google

carnal restitution did figure the true instauration[1] of the Church of God, which is accomplished in Christ; yea, it was only the beginning thereof. That, therefore, which happened then, must needs more certainly be fulfilled now, in the progress and perfection of the deliverance.

28. *For he making his account short.* The diversity of interpretations being omitted, this seemeth unto me the natural sense, The Lord will both so shorten and cut off his people, that that which shall remain may seem (as it were) a certain consumption; that is, the form or print of a wonderful great ruin. Yet this fewness which shall remain of the consumption or wasting shall be the work of the Lord's righteousness; or, which I like better, shall serve to testify the righteousness of God through the whole world.

Because *word* generally in Scripture signifieth a *thing; word consummated* or *perfected* is put for *consummation* or *perfection;* where many interpreters have grossly erred, whilst they go about to reason too subtilely; for they have imagined that the doctrine of the gospel is so called, because the ceremonies being cut off, it is a brief abridgment of the law; although it ought rather to be called a consumption.

Isa. x. 22, and xxviii. 22. Where also not only there, but in Esay and Ezechiel, the interpreter hath erred, where it is said, "Ah, ah, Lord God, wilt thou make a consummation of the remnants of Israel?"

Ezec. xi. 13 when the prophets would say, Wilt thou destroy even the remnants unto utter destruction? And that cometh to pass through the ambiguity (or doubtfulness) of the Hebrew word.

For seeing the word כלה may signify as well *to end* and *finish* as *to consume*, this difference hath not been sufficiently observed in [its] place. Neither hath Esay, word for word, so spoken; but he hath put two substantive nouns, namely, *consumption* and *definition*, or *deciding* and *ending;* so that the desire or seeking after Hebraism[2] in the Greek interpreter is marvellous unreasonable. For to what purpose is it to inwrap a sentence, by itself clear, in an obscure and figurative

[1] "Instaurationem," renewal. [2] "Hebraismi affectatio," the affectation of Hebraism.

Digitized by Google

speech? Add also, that Esay speaketh here excessively,[1] whilst by *consumption* he meaneth *extenuation* or *diminishing*,) such as is wont to be in some famous destruction.

29. *And as Esay had said before.* He bringeth another testimony out of the first chapter, where the prophet bewaileth the destruction of Israel in his time. And if that hath been once done, it is no new example. For the people of Israel hath no prerogative, but from their parents (or ancestors;) who, notwithstanding, were handled in such sort, that the prophet complaineth they are so afflicted, that they were but a little from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet this difference there was, that a few were reserved for a seed, to raise up the name, lest it should perish utterly, and, by eternal forgetfulness, be wiped out; for it behoved God alway to be so mindful of his promise, that, in the midst of his most severe judgments, he might leave some place for mercy.

30. *What shall we say, then? that the Gentiles, which followed not righteousness, have attained unto righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*

31. *But Israel, in following the law of righteousness, hath not attained unto the law of righteousness.*

32. *Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by works. For they have stumbled at the stumbling-stone.*

33. *As it is written, Behold, I lay a stumbling-stone in Zion, and a rock of offence; and every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed.*

30. *What shall we say, then?* Now, that he might take from the Jews all occasion of murmuring against God, he beginneth to show those causes may be comprehended by man's capacity, why the nation of the Jews was so rejected. But they do lewdly, and invert order, who go about to set and erect these causes above the secret predestination of God, which he taught before to be taken for the first or

[1] "Hyperbolice," hyperbolically.

Digitized by Google

highest cause. Howbeit, as that is above all causes, so the corruption and wickedness of the ungodly doth give place and matter to the judgments of God. And because he had to deal in a difficult cause, he useth a communication, and demandeth (as though he doubted) what might be said here.

That the Gentiles, which followed not righteousness. Nothing was thought more absurd or unlike, than that the Gentiles, who, having no care of righteousness, wallowed in the pleasures of their flesh, being called into the participation of salvation, should obtain righteousness; and the Jews, on the contrary, who seriously gave diligence to the works of the law, should be put beside all reward of righteousness.

Paul so uttereth that in bare words, which was a marvellous paradox (or strange thing,) that, by a reason added, he tempereth whatsoever sharpness or roughness was in it; namely, that that righteousness [which] the Gentiles attained unto doth consist in faith; and, therefore, doth depend upon the mercy of the Lord, and not on man's own worthiness. And that that study of the law [which] was in the Jews[1] was preposterous, because they sought to be justified by works; and so they laboured to attain unto that whereunto man cannot come. Yea, they also were offended at Christ, by whom only we have entrance to obtain righteousness.

There is no salvation without righteousness.

But the purpose of the apostle in this former member is to advance the mere grace of God, that no other cause should be sought for in the calling of the Gentiles than this, namely, that he vouchsafed to embrace them, being unworthy of his favour. He speaketh of righteousness by name, without the which salvation cometh not; but whilst he saith it proceedeth from faith, he giveth to understand that the righteousness of the Gentiles doth consist in free reconciliation; for if any imagine they were therefore justified, because by faith they had gotten the Spirit of regeneration, he is far wide from the mind of Paul; for it could not be

[1] "Studium autem illud legis quo Judæi tenebantur," but that zeal for the law by which the Jews were actuated.

Digitized by Google

true, that they obtained that [which] they sought not, unless the Lord freely embraced them, straying and wandering, and offered them righteousness, whereof, inasmuch as they knew it not, there could flourish no study amongst them; but, also, it is to be noted, that the Gentiles did not otherwise obtain righteousness by faith, but because God prevented their faith by his grace.

For if by faith they had first attained unto righteousness, this now had been to follow it; therefore, faith itself was a portion of grace.

31. *Israel, in following righteousness.* Paul doth frankly denounce that which was incredible to be spoken; namely, that it was no marvel if the Jews, by following righteousness earnestly, profited nothing, because, by running out of the way, they wearied themselves in vain. Now, in the first place, he seemeth unto me to have put the law of righteousness, by the figure *hypallage*, for the righteousness of the law; and in the repetition of the second member, in another sense, to have so termed [it] the form or rule of righteousness; therefore, the sum is, That Israel, depending upon the righteousness of the law, namely, that which is prescribed in the law, had not the true manner of justification.[1] And it is a notable allusion of words,[2] whilst he teacheth that the legal righteousness was in cause that[3] they fell from the law of righteousness.

Hypallage when things are turned upside down.

32. *Not by faith, but, as it were, by works.* Because commonly the excuse of preposterous zeal seemeth to be just, Paul showeth they are justly rejected, who seek to get unto themselves salvation by the confidence of works, because so much as in them is they destroy faith, out of the which there is no health to be hoped for. Therefore, if they should be partakers of their desire, that success should be a making void of true righteousness.[4]

[1] "Veram justificationis rationem non tenuerit," has not obtained the true method of justification. [2] "Paronomasia." [3] "In causa fuisse ut," was partly the cause why. [4] "Itaque, si voti compotes forent, talis successus veræ justitiæ exinanitio foret." Therefore, if they were

Digitized by Google

Faith and the merit of works are utterly contrary.

Furthermore, thou dost see how faith and the merits of works are compared together, as things utterly contrary. Seeing, then, the confidence of works is a great let whereby the way to obtain righteousness is stopped up against us, it is necessary that that being rejected, we rest upon the only goodness of God; for this example of the Jews ought justly to terrify all those who seek to obtain the kingdom of God by works.

For, as it is already declared, he calleth not the observations of ceremonies the works of the law, but the merits of works, unto the which faith is opposed; which faith, not regarding his [its] own worthiness, doth (that I may say so) with both eyes behold the sole mercy of God.

For they have stumbled at the stumbling-stone. By an excellent reason he confirmeth the former sentence; for nothing is more absurd, than that they should obtain righteousness which go about to overthrow it. Christ is given unto us for righteousness; he laboureth to deprive him of his office whoso thrusteth upon God the righteousness of works. And hereby it appeareth, so often as men rest upon the confidence of works, under the vain pretence of being zealous for righteousness, by furious folly they fight with God.

How justiciaries stumble at Christ.

Moreover, it is no hard matter to be known how they stumble at Christ who trust to the confidence of works; for, except we acknowledge ourselves to be sinners, bare and void of righteousness that is our own, we obscure the dignity of Christ, which consisteth in this, that he might be light, health, life, resurrection, righteousness, and medicine, to us all. And to what end serve all these, but that he might lighten the blind, restore the damned, quicken the dead, rear them up [that] are brought to nothing, wash them [that] are full of filth, cure and heal those [that] are deadly diseased; yea, if we claim unto ourselves any righteousness, we do in a sort strive with the power of Christ, seeing his office is as well to beat down all pride of flesh, as to ease and comfort those [who] labour and are heavy laden.

to obtain their wish, such success would be the destruction of true righteousness.

Digitized by Google

And the testimony is properly cited; for there God denounceth that he will be an offence to the people of Judah and Israel, whereat they should stumble and fall.

Seeing Christ is the same God [who] spake by the prophet, it is no marvel though that be now fulfilled in him. And calling Christ *a stone of offence*, he admonisheth, that it is not strange if they profited not in the way of righteousness who stumbled at the offence by their own perverse stubbornness, when God had declared an easy way. And it is to be noted, that this doth not properly, and of itself, agree unto Christ, but rather is accidental, by the malice of men, as it followeth straightway.

33. *And every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed.* He addeth this testimony, being taken other where, to the consolation of the godly; as if he said, Whereas Christ is called a *stone of offence*, there is no cause that therefore we should be afraid of him, or instead of trust conceive trembling; for he is ordained to the ruin of the faithless, but to the life and resurrection of the godly. Therefore, as that prophecy of stumbling and offence is fulfilled in the rebellious and faithless, so there is another which is directed to the godly; namely, that he is a strong stone, a precious and corner-stone, most firmly grounded, upon whom whosoever shall lean he shall not fall. And whereas he hath put *not to be ashamed*, for *not to make haste*, or *precipitate*, that he had from the Greek interpreter. Assuredly the Lord there goeth about to confirm the hope of his; and when the Lord biddeth us hope well, thereby it followeth that we cannot be ashamed. See the place of Peter, not much unlike unto this. 1 Peter ii. 6.

CHAPTER X.

1. *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer unto God for Israel is, that they might be saved.*

Digitized by Google

2. *For I bear them record that they have the zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*
3. *For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.*
4. *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth.*

Hereby we may see with how great carefulness the man of God doth occur or meet with offences;[1] for yet, that he might temper whatsoever was bitter or sharp, in opening the rejection of the Jews, he testifieth, as before, his good will towards them, and doth confirm the same by the effect; namely, that he had a care of their salvation before the Lord; for this affection springeth from pure charity. Although, perhaps, for some other cause also, he was forced to testify his love towards the nation whereof he came; for his doctrine had never been received of the Jews if they had thought him to be their sworn enemy; and also his falling from the law had been suspected of the Gentiles, because they had thought that for the hatred of men he was an apostate from the law, as we have touched in the former chapter.

2. *For I bear them record.* This appertaineth to procure credit to his love; for there was just cause why he should rather have compassion on them than hate them; seeing that he saw they fell only of ignorance, and not through wickedness of mind, yea, when he saw that for no other cause than for some affection of God they were moved to persecute the kingdom of Christ. But hereby let us learn whither our intention do carry us, if we obey him. Commonly this is thought to be a good and very fit excuse, when he that is reproved pretendeth he meant no harm. And this pretence at this day holdeth a great many, that they apply not their study to search out the truth of God, because they think that to be excusable whatsoever they transgress of ignorance, without set malice, yea, with a good intention. But there is none of us can excuse the Jews, that

It is dangerous to follow our good intentions.

[1] "Sanctus vir offensionibus obviârit," the holy man has obviated, or guarded against giving offence.

Digitized by Google

they crucified Christ, that they cruelly raged against the apostles, that they went about to destroy and extinguish the gospel; and yet they had the same defence, wherein we glory securely. Therefore, let those vain (hastings or) wranglings[1] of good intention go. If we seek the Lord from our heart, let us follow the way by the which[2] there is access unto him. For it is better, (as Augustine saith,) yea, even to halt in the way, than to run stoutly out of the way. If we would be religious, let us remember that [that] is true which Lactantius teacheth, namely, that[3] is true religion which is joined with the Word of God. And again, when we see them to perish who, through good intention, wander in darkness, let us think we are worthy of a thousand deaths if we, being illuminated of God, do wittingly and willingly wander from his way.

3. *For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God.* Behold how, through rash zeal, they erred; namely, that they went about to erect their own righteousness; which foolish trust came of the ignorance of God's righteousness. Mark the *antithesis*, (or contrariety,) of the righteousness of God and men: first, we see they are opposed one against the other as things contrary, and which cannot stand together; whereby it followeth that the righteousness of God is overthrown so soon as men establish their own righteousness. Secondly, to the end the *antitheta* (or contrarieties) might answer one the other, out of question that is called the righteousness of God which is the gift of God; as, again, that is called the righteousness of men which they seek in or of themselves, or which they trust that they bring unto God. Therefore, he is not subject to the righteousness of God who will be justified in himself; because the first step to obtain the righteousness of God is to resign (or forsake) his own righteousness. For to what end is it to seek for righteousness elsewhere but because necessity doth constrain us; and we have declared in another place how men put on the righteousness of God by faith; namely, be-

What righteousness is called the righteousness of God, and what the righteousness of men.

[1] "Tergiversationes," quibblings.
[2] "Sola," alone, omitted.
[3] "Demum," only, omitted.

Digitized by Google

cause the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto them. Finally, Paul doth greatly disgrace that pride wherewith hypocrites are puffed up, howsomever it be covered with a fair face of zeal, whilst he saith the yoke of God being, as it were, shaken off, they are all adversaries and rebels against the righteousness of God.

4. *For Christ is the end of the law.* The word *fulfilling* seemeth unto me not to serve amiss in this place, as Erasmus also hath translated it *perfection;* but because the other reading is received by the consent almost of all men, and the same also agreeth well, the readers, for my part, shall be at liberty to retain it. By this reason the apostle meeteth with[1] an objection which might be moved against him; for the Jews might seem to have kept the right way, because they applied (or gave themselves) to the righteousness of the law. It stood him in hand to refute this false opinion, which thing he doth here. For he showeth that he is a preposterous interpreter of the law who seeketh to be justified by the works thereof; because the law was given to this end, that it might lead us by the hand to another righteousness. Yea, whatsoever the law teacheth, whatsoever it commandeth, whatsoever it promiseth, it hath Christ alway for its mark; so, then, all the parts thereof are to be directed unto him. And that cannot be unless we, being spoiled of all righteousness, confounded with the knowledge of sin, do seek for free righteousness of him only. Whereby it followeth that the corrupt abuse of the law is justly reprehended in the Jews, who lewdly of their help made their hinderance; yea, it appeareth they did shamefully lame[2] the law of God, who, having rejected the (life or) soul thereof, did take to them the dead body of the letter. For, albeit the law of righteousness doth promise a reward to its observers,[3] yet, after it hath brought all under guiltiness, it substituteth a new righteousness in Christ, which is not gotten by the merit of works, but, being freely given, is re-

[1] "Occurrit," obviates. [2] "Mutilasse," mutilate. [3] "Quamvis enim mercedem lex justitiæ suæ observatoribus promittat," for although the law promises a reward to the observers of its righteousness.

Digitized by Google

ceived by faith. So the righteousness of faith (as we saw in the first chapter) hath testimony of the law. And we have here a notable place, that the law in all its parts respecteth Christ; and therefore no man can have the true understanding thereof who doth not still seek to come unto this mark.

5. *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doth these things shall live in them.*
6. *But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ from above:)*
7. *Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ again from the dead.)*
8. *But what saith it? The word is near thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: this is the word of faith which we preach;*
9. *For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth man confesseth to salvation.*

5. *For Moses describeth, &c.* That it might appear how greatly the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of works are contrary one to the other, he compareth them together; for by comparison the repugnancy which is between things contrary appeareth better. And he dealeth not with the oracles of the prophets, but with the testimony of Moses, for this only cause, that the Jews might understand there was not a law given by Moses which should hold them in the confidence of works; but which should rather lead them unto Christ; for although he should have alleged the prophets for witnesses of his sentence, yet this doubt had remained, why the law did prescribe another form of righteousness. He, therefore, notably removeth this scruple, whilst he confirmeth the righteousness of faith, even by the doctrine of the law.

Why Paul rather alegeth the testimony of Moses than the prophets.

Furthermore, whereas Paul maketh the law consent with faith, and yet opposeth the righteousness of that against the righteousness of this, the reason thereof must be known.

Digitized by Google

The law hath a twofold acception.

The law hath a twofold acception; for sometimes it signifieth all that doctrine [which] was delivered by Moses, sometimes but that part which was proper to his ministry; namely, which is contained in precepts, rewards, and punishments. For Moses generally had this office, that he might instruct the people in the true rule of godliness. Which thing, if it be true, it behoved him to preach repentance and faith; but faith is not taught, unless the promises of God's mercy, and the same free promises be propounded (or set) before the people; therefore, it behoved him to be a preacher of the gospel; which thing he did faithfully, as appeareth by divers places. And to the end he might inform[1] the people unto repentance, it was his part to teach what manner of life were acceptable to God; and that he hath comprised in the precepts of the law. Now, to the end he might put into the minds of the people a love of righteousness, and, again, insert a hatred of sin, promises and threatenings were to be added, which might declare, how there are rewards laid up for the just, and horrible punishments for the wicked. Now, also, it was the duty of the people to consider by how many ways they were accursed, and how far they were from that, that they could merit God by their works; so they, being in despair of their own righteousness, might flee unto the haven of God's goodness, and that is unto Christ himself. This was the end of Moses' ministry.

And now, because the promises of the gospel are only read here and there in Moses, and the same also very obscurely, but the precepts and rewards, appointed for the keepers of the law, appear eftsoons,[2] worthily is this office properly and peculiarly given unto Moses, to teach what true righteousness of works is; secondly, to show what reward remaineth for the observation, and what punishment for the transgression thereof. In this respect, Moses himself is compared with Christ in John; where it is said, The law was given by Moses, grace and truth is fulfilled by Christ. And so often as the law is taken so strictly, Moses

John i. 17.

[1] "Institueret," might train or instruct.

[2] "Identidem," ever and anon.

Digitized by Google

is covertly opposed unto Christ; and, therefore, we are then to consider what the law containeth in itself, being separate from the gospel. That, therefore, which is said here of the righteousness of the law, must be referred not unto the whole office of Moses, but unto this part, which peculiarly in a manner was committed unto him. Now I come unto the words,

For Moses describeth. Paul hath γραφει, in Latin, *scribit*, in English, *he writeth;* but it is the figure *aphairesis*, for the word *describit, i. e., he describeth.* And the place is taken out of Leviticus, where the Lord promiseth eternal life to them [who] shall keep his law. For thou seest that Paul, also, hath so taken it, not of a temporal or transitory life only, which pleaseth so many. And Paul reasoneth thus from that place, Seeing no man can obtain righteousness prescribed in the law, but he that fulfilleth exactly every part thereof—and all men have always been far from that perfection—in vain doth any seek for salvation this way. Israel, therefore, did amiss, which thought he could obtain the righteousness of the law, from the which we are all excluded. See how he argueth from the promise itself, that it profiteth us nothing, namely, because of the impossible condition.

Aphairesis is, the taking away of a letter or syllable from the beginning of a word. Levit. xviii. 5.

What a foolish toy is it, then, to allege legal promises to establish the righteousness of works? For a sure curse abideth for us [with] them; so far is it off that salvation should come thence unto us. The more abominable is the sottishness of Papists, who think it sufficient to prove merits by bare promises.[1] It is not in vain (quoth they) that God hath promised life to his worshippers; but, in the meanwhile, they see not that it is therefore promised, that the sense of their transgressions might put into all men the fear of death; and so they, being forced by their own want, might learn to flee unto Christ.

6. *But the righteousness which is of faith.* This place is such as may greatly trouble the reader; and that for two causes. For both it seemeth to be improperly wrested of

[1] "Ad probanda merita nudas promissiones arripere," seize upon bare promises to prove merits.

Digitized by Google

[by] Paul, and also the words seem to be changed into another sense. But concerning the words, we shall see what is to be said of them: First, let us consider the application; for it is a place of Deuteronomy, where (as in the former place) Moses speaketh of the doctrine of the law; and Paul draweth it unto the promises of the gospel. This knot may be well untied thus: Moses in that place showeth the facility (or easiness) of coming unto life, because the will of God was not now hid nor set afar off from the Jews, but was laid before their eyes. If he spake of the law only, it had been a frivolous argument; seeing the law of God being put before our eyes, is nothing more easy to be done than if it were set afar off. Therefore, he noteth not the law only, but, in general, all the doctrine of God, which comprehendeth under it the gospel. For the word of the law by itself is never in our heart; no, not the least syllable thereof, until it be put in by the faith of the gospel. Secondly, yea, even after regeneration, the word of the law shall not properly be said to be in our heart; because it requireth perfection, from the which the faithful themselves are far off. But the word of the gospel hath his seat in the heart, although it filleth not the heart; for it offereth pardon for the imperfection and want. And Moses altogether in that chapter (as also in the fourth) studieth to commend unto the people the singular love of God, because he had received them into his tuition and government; which commendation could not be taken from the bare law. Neither letteth it that Moses preacheth there of reforming the life unto the rule of the law; for the spirit of regeneration is coupled with the[1] righteousness of faith. Therefore, he collecteth the one out of the other; because the observation of the law is of the faith of Christ. Neither is it to be doubted but this sentence dependeth upon that principle, *the Lord shall circumcise thine heart;* which he had put down a little before in the same chapter. Wherefore, they are easily refuted who say that Moses intreateth there of good works. Indeed, I confess that to be true; but I deny it to be absurd that

Deut. xxx. 13, 14.

[1] "Gratuita," gratuitous, omitted,

Digitized by Google

the observation of the law should be drawn from this fountain, that is, from the righteousness of faith. Now the opening[1] of the words is to be sought for.

Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend, &c. Moses nameth *heaven* and the *sea*, as places furthest off, and hard for a man to come unto. But Paul, as though there were some spiritual mystery hidden under these words, draweth them unto the death and resurrection of Christ. If any allege that this interpretation is too much wrested, and too subtile, let him know the mind of the apostle was not (curiously or) exactly to handle the place of Moses, but only to apply it unto the treatise of the present cause. He doth not, therefore, recite syllable by syllable what is in Moses; but he useth a polishing, whereby he applieth[2] the testimony of Moses more nearly to his purpose. He[3] spoke of places [which] are not to be come unto: Paul hath expressed those places which are most of all hidden from our eyes, and yet are to be seen of our faith. Wherefore, if you take these to be spoken by the way of amplification or polishing, thou canst not say that Paul hath violently and unaptly wrested the words of Moses; but rather thou wilt confess, that, without any damage to the sense, he hath notably alluded unto the words, *heaven* and *sea*. Now let us expound the words of Paul simply; because the assurance of our salvation dependeth upon two principles;[4] namely, whilst we understand that life is purchased for us, and death conquered to us. With both which he teacheth our faith is supported by the word of the gospel; for Christ by dying hath swallowed up death; by rising again he hath gotten life in his power.

Now, if in the gospel the benefit of Christ's death and resurrection is communicated unto us, then there is no cause that we should seek further for any thing. Therefore, that it might appear [that] the righteousness of faith is abundantly sufficient unto salvation, he teacheth that those two members which only are necessary unto salvation are contained in it.

Who, then, shall ascend into heaven? is as much as if he

[1] "Explicatio," the explanation. [2] "Accommodat," accommodates.
[3] "Ille," the former, (Moses.) [4] "Fundamentis," foundations.

Digitized by Google

said, Who knoweth whether that inheritance of eternal and celestial life abideth for us?

Who shall descend into the deep? As if thou said, Who knoweth whether eternal death of the soul also follow the death of the body? Both which doubts he teacheth to be taken away by the righteousness of faith; for the one should bring Christ down from heaven, the other from death should bring him back again; for the ascension of Christ into heaven ought so to establish our faith of eternal life, that he, in a manner, draweth Christ himself out of the possession of the heavens, that doubteth whether the inheritance of heaven be prepared for the faithful, in whose name and cause[1] he is entered in thither. Likewise, seeing he took upon him the great horrors of hell, that he might deliver us thence, to call it into question whether the faithful be still subject to this misery, is to make his death void, and in a manner to deny it.

Christ, in his human nature, hath taken possession of the heavens for the faithful.

8. *But what saith it?* That negative speech which the apostle hath hitherto used did serve to take away the impediments of faith. It remaineth, therefore, that he declare the manner of obtaining righteousness, unto the which end this affirmation is added. And whereas there is an interrogation interposed, when they might all have been spoken together in one course of speech, that is done to procure attention. And also his meaning is to show what a great difference there is between the righteousness of the law and the gospel, seeing that showeth itself afar off, and doth drive away all men from coming unto it; but this, offering itself at hand, doth familiarly invite us unto the fruition of it.

The word is near thee. First of all this is to be noted, that lest the minds of men, being carried away by vain circumstances, should err from salvation, the bounds of the Word are prescribed unto them within the which they ought to keep themselves; for it is as if he should command them to be content with the Word only, and admonish them, that in this glass the secrets of heaven are to be seen, which

[1] "Causa," and on whose account.

Digitized by Google

would both dazzle their eyes with their brightness, and astonish their ears, and also make the mind itself amazed.

Therefore, the godly receive an excellent consolation out of this place, touching the certainty of the Word; namely, that they may as safely rest therein as in the most present beholding of things, or as in any thing [that] is present and in hand.[1] Secondly, it is to be noted, that such a word is propounded by Moses, wherein we have firm and sure trust of salvation.

This is the word of faith. Justly doth Paul take that; for the doctrine of the law doth not pacify and quiet the conscience, neither doth it minister unto the conscience those things wherewith it ought to be content. Yet, in the meanwhile, he excludeth not the other parts of the Word, no, not the precepts of the law; but his mind is to put down remission of sins for righteousness, and that without such exact obedience as the law requireth. Therefore, the word of the gospel, wherein we are not commanded to merit righteousness by works, but to embrace it by faith, being freely offered, sufficeth to pacify men's consciences and establish their salvation. And *the word of faith*, by the figure *metonymia*, is put for the *word of promise*, that is, for the gospel; because it hath a relation with faith; for the contrariety whereby the law is discerned from the gospel must be understood. And out of this note of distinction we gather, as the law requireth works, so the gospel requireth nothing else but that men bring faith to receive the grace of God. This parcel, [clause,] *which we preach*, is therefore added, lest any should suspect Paul to dissent from Moses; for he testifieth that in the ministry of the gospel he agreeth with Moses, seeing he also did not place our felicity any other where than in the promise of God's grace.

9. *So that if thou confess.* This also is rather an allusion than a proper and natural[2] interpretation. For it is likely that Moses, by the figure *synecdoche*, did use the word *mouth* for face or countenance. But it was not unseemly for the

Synecdoche is, when by one thing another is understood.

[1] "Quam in præsentissimo rerum aspectu," as in any thing actually present. [2] "Genuina," genuine.

Digitized by Google

apostle to allude unto the word *mouth* to this sense. When the Lord publisheth his word before our face, assuredly he calleth us unto the confession thereof. For wheresoever the word of the Lord is, there it ought to fructify, and the fruit is the confession of the mouth; whereas he putteth confession before faith, it is the figure *anastrophe*, very usual in the Scriptures. For the order had been better, if faith of the heart being put in the first place, confession of the mouth, which proceedeth thence, had been added. And he doth confess the Lord Jesus aright who adorneth him with his virtue, acknowledging him to be such an one as he is given of the Father, and described in the gospel.

Anastrophe is, an inversion of words, when that is first [which] should be last, &c.

And whereas resurrection only is named, we must not so take it, as though his death were in no place; but because Christ, by rising again, made up our salvation.[1] For albeit our redemption and satisfaction was accomplished by his death, by the which we are reconciled unto God, yet the victory against sin, death, and Satan, was gotten by his resurrection. Hence, also, came righteousness, newness of life, and the hope of blessed immortality. And, therefore, oftentimes resurrection only is set before us for our confidence of salvation, not that it should lead us away from his death, but because it testifieth the effect and fruit of his death; to be brief, his resurrection containeth in it his death; whereof we have said somewhat in the sixth chapter. [Add] also, that Paul requireth not only an historical faith, but he compriseth the end thereof in the resurrection. For we must remember wherefore Christ rose again; namely, that in raising him, the counsel (or advice) of God the Father was, to restore us all to life. For although Christ had this power of himself to take his soul again, yet, notwithstanding, this work for the most part in the Scripture is ascribed unto God the Father.

10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.* This place may further us to the understanding of the justification of faith. For it declareth that we are thereby jus-

[1] "Omnes salutis nostræ numeros implevit," completed our salvation in all its parts.

Digitized by Google

tified, that we embrace the mercy of God offered unto us in the gospel; hence, therefore, is it that we are just, because we believe that God is gracious unto us in Christ. But let us note, that the seat of faith is not in the head, but in the heart; and yet I will not contend about that matter, in what part of the body faith resteth; but because the word *heart* is almost alway taken for a serious and sincere affection, I say faith is a firm and effectual confidence, and not a bare knowledge only. What faith is.

With his mouth man maketh confession unto salvation. It may seem marvellous, why he should [not] attribute a portion of our salvation unto confession, having so often before this testified that we are saved by faith only. But thereby it may not be collected that confession is the cause of our salvation; only his mind is to show how God doth perfect our salvation, namely, whilst he causeth faith, which he hath put into our hearts, to appear forth by confession. Yea, his mind was simply to note which is true faith, whence this fruit proceedeth, lest any should pretend a vain title of faith for it; for true faith ought so to kindle the heart with the study of God's glory, that the flame thereof may appear forth. And, surely, he that is justified even now already hath obtained salvation; therefore, the faith of the heart maketh no less unto salvation than the confession of the mouth. Thou seest he hath so distinguished that he referreth the cause of justification unto faith; and, in the second place, showeth what is necessary for the consummation of salvation. For neither can any believe but he must confess with his mouth; and there is a necessity of perpetual consequence, not which may ascribe salvation unto confession. But let them see what they can answer unto Paul, who at this day proudly boast unto us an imaginary faith, which, being content with the secrecy of the heart, leaveth out confession of mouth as a superfluous[1] thing. For it is too childish to say there is fire there, where there is neither flame nor heat. The nature of true faith.

[1] "Et inani," and empty, omitted.

Digitized by Google

11. *For the Scripture saith, Every one that believeth in him shall not be ashamed.*

12. *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Grecian: for he that is Lord over all is rich unto all that call on him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

11. *For the Scripture saith.* Having noted the causes why God did justly reject the Jews, he returneth to affirm (or prove) the calling of the Gentiles, which is the other part of the question wherein he is now conversant. Because, therefore, he had declared the way whereby men come unto salvation, and the same is no less common and open for the Gentiles than the Jews; now, adding first an universal sign, he doth plainly extend it to the Gentiles: Secondly, he also calleth the Gentiles by name unto it; and he repeateth that testimony which he had already alleged out of Esay, that his sentence might have the more authority; and also that it might appear how well the prophecies spoken of Christ do consent with the law.

12. *For there is no difference or respect, &c.* If confidence or faith only be required, and wheresoever the same shall be found, there, again, the love of God shall show forth itself to salvation: then shall be no difference or respect of kindred or nation. And he addeth a most firm reason; for if he who is the Creator and Maker of the whole world, be the God of all men, he will show himself loving to all who shall acknowledge and call upon him as God. For seeing his mercy is infinite, it cannot be chosen, but that it should extend itself to all who crave or seek for the same. *Rich* is taken, in this place, actively, for *bountiful* and *beneficial.*

The riches of God cannot be decreased.

Where we must note that the richness of our Father cannot be diminished *or decreased* by his bounty and liberality, and, therefore, that we have nothing the less, albeit he enrich others with the manifold treasures of his grace. Therefore, there is no cause why we should envy one another's prosperity, as if thereby we lost or wanted any thing. And albeit this reason of itself was strong enough, yet he confirmeth it by the testimony of the Prophet Joel; because

Joel ii. 22.

Digitized by Google

the universal particle being expressed,[1] he includeth all men together. But the readers shall perceive much better by the circumstance, that that which Joel uttereth doth agree with this place, (and likewise that in the Acts;) both because in that place he doth prophesy of Christ's kingdom, and also having foretold that the anger of God should burn exceedingly in the midst of this his threatening, he promiseth salvation to all who shall call upon the name of God. Whereupon it followeth that the grace of God doth pierce, even to the very depth of death, so far forth as it be sought for thence, that it is not to be denied the Gentiles.[2] Acts i. 24.

14. *How, then, shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*
15. *But how shall they preach except they be sent? according as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them who bring tidings of peace, who bring tidings of good things!*
16. *But all have not obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our speech?*
17. *Therefore faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Here I will not busy the reader over long in reciting and refuting other men's opinions. Let every man use his own judgment, and let it be lawful for me freely to say what I think. Therefore, that you may understand what is the end of this gradation, consider, first, that there was a mutual conjunction betwixt the calling of the Gentiles and the ministry of Paul which he did perform (and execute) among them; so that the approbation of the one did depend upon the approbation of the other. Now, it behoved Paul to make the calling of the Gentiles manifest, and without all doubt or question, and also to show a reason of his ministry, lest that he should seem to publish the grace of God

Gradation is, when the speech is so distinguished by degrees, that that which endeth one member beginneth the next.

[1] "Expressa particula universali," by the use of a general term.
[2] "Ut minime arcenda sit a Gentibus," so that the Gentiles can by no means be excluded from it.

Digitized by Google

amiss,[1] in that he did withdraw (or take) from the children of God the bread which was properly appointed for them, and give it to dogs; and, therefore, he doth both these things together. But the coherency and agreement of his words will not be perfectly understood, before that every particular part thereof be expounded in order. This his proceeding is as much in effect as if he should say, That both Jews and Gentiles declare and show that they believe in God, by calling upon his name; because the true calling upon the name of God cannot be, except there were first a right knowledge of him. Furthermore, faith cometh by the Word of God. But the Word of God is preached in no place but by the special providence and appointment of God. Therefore, where the invocation of God is, there is also faith; where faith is, there was also first the seed of the Word; where preaching is, there is also the calling of God, (or there men are called of God.) Now, where there is so effectual and fruitful a calling of God, there is an evident and infallible token of God's love. Whereby it is apparent that the Gentiles are not to be (debarred or) excluded the kingdom of God, whom God hath admitted into the fellowship and participation of salvation. For as the preaching of the gospel is the cause of their faith, so God's sending is the cause of preaching, whereby it pleaseth him to provide for their salvation after this manner. Now let us examine particularly that which followeth.

14. *How shall they call, &c.* Paul's mind is to join the invocation of God with faith, as, indeed, they are things nearly linked and joined together; for he who calleth upon God doth (as it were) commit himself into the only haven of safety, and that which is the most sure kind of refuge; he doth like a son repose or lay himself, as it were, in the bosom of a most good and loving Father, that by his care he may be protected, by his indulgency and love he may be cherished, by his bounty he may be relieved, by his virtue he may be stayed and upheld. Which thing no man can

To flee unto God in prayers, is the safest haven of all.

[1] "Ne videretur gratiam Dei perperam dispergere," lest he should seem improperly to squander the grace of God.

Digitized by Google

do, who before hath not so certain a persuasion of God's fatherly love toward him settled in his mind, that he dare boldly hope or look for any thing at his hands.

Therefore, it is necessary that he who calleth upon God should assure himself to receive aid and help from him. For Paul speaketh here of that invocation which pleaseth God. For hypocrites call upon God, but not to their salvation, because they call upon him without any sense or feeling of faith. Whereby it is evident how foolish all the schoolmen be who offer themselves doubtfully to God, not being stayed by faith. Paul is of a quite contrary mind, who taketh this as a principle granted;[1] namely, that we cannot pray aright unless we be certainly persuaded of the success. Neither doth he set down here an intricate (or doubtful) faith, but the certainty or assurance which our minds conceive of his fatherly love and goodness, whilst by the gospel he reconcileth us to himself, and adopteth us for his sons. By this confidence only we have access to him; as it is also to the Ephesians. And, on the other side, gather that that only is true faith, which, of itself, bringeth forth the invocation of God. For it cannot be but that he should continually aspire unto the goodness of God by all prayers, (or supplications,) who once hath tasted of the same. Eph. iii. 12.

How shall they believe in him of whom, &c. The sum and sense of these words is this; namely, that we are after a sort dumb, until the promise of God open our mouth to pray. Which order also he noteth in the Prophet Zechariah, in these words: "I will say to them, You are my people; and they shall say to me, Thou art our God." For it is not our parts to feign and imagine what manner of God we list. Therefore, we must have the true and lawful knowledge of him, such as is set down in his Word. And if any man shall suppose God to be good by his own sense and imagination, that shall be no sure and stable faith, but a wavering and wandering imagination. And, therefore, the Word is necessarily required to the true knowledge of God. Here he hath set down no other word than that which is preached, because this is the ordinary means which the Lord hath Zech. xiii. 9.

God must be known and worshipped according to his word.

[1] "Confessum axioma," an acknowledged axiom.

Digitized by Google

appointed for the dispensation thereof. But if any man shall hereby contend to prove, that God could not otherwise than by the means of preaching infuse or pour his knowledge into men, we deny that to be the meaning of the apostle, who had respect only to the ordinary dispensation of God, and would not prescribe any law or limitation to his grace.

15. *How shall they preach except they be sent?* He meaneth that it is an argument and pledge of the love of God, when he doth vouchsafe any nation with the preaching of his gospel, and that there is no preacher thereof whom he hath not stirred up by his special Providence; and, therefore, there is no question but God doth visit that nation where his gospel is preached. But because Paul doth not here handle the lawful calling of every man to that function, it should be needless to use any long speech thereof in this place. Only it may suffice for to remember thus much, namely, that the gospel doth not fall down, and, as it were, by chance, like rain out of the clouds, but is brought by the hands (and ministry of men) whither it is sent from above.

The gospel cometh not by chance unto any people.

As it is written, How beautiful, &c. Thus we ought to apply this testimony of Esay and Nahum to this present matter: The Lord offering hope of deliverance to his people, setteth forth the coming of them who should bring the gladsome tidings thereof, with a singular commendation. Thereby, therefore, he hath declared that the office or ministry of the apostles is to be had in no less price and estimation, by which the tidings of eternal life is brought unto us. And thereupon it followeth that it cometh from God, forasmuch as there is nothing to be desired or praiseworthy in this world which doth not proceed and come from his hand.

Isa. lii. 7. Nahum i. 15.

Here also we learn how greatly the preaching of the gospel is to be desired; and how highly it is to be esteemed of all good men, which is commended in such sort by the mouth of God. Neither is it to be doubted but that God speaketh gloriously of the incomparable price of this treasure, that all men's minds may be awakened and stirred up

Digitized by Google

to seek for the same greedily. By this word *feet* understand in this place their *coming*, by the figure *metonymia*.

16. *But all have not obeyed the gospel.* This pertaineth nothing to that argument which Paul prosecuteth and followeth in this gradation; and, therefore, he doth repeat it in the conclusion which followeth straightway; but yet it was very necessary and expedient for Paul to join this also instead of a *preoccupation*, lest that, whereas it was said that the word doth always ordinarily go before faith, even as the seed is before the corn, any man should reason or draw an argument from the contrary part, and infer that faith must needs follow wheresoever the word is; for so might Israel glory, who never wanted the word. Therefore it was meet and requisite for him to declare this in his way or passage, that many are called who are not chosen. And he citeth a place out of Esay and John, where the prophet, being about to publish that excellent oracle of the death and kingdom of Christ, doth first with admiration and wonder speak of the (paucity and) fewness of believers, which in spirit appeared such to him as forced him to cry out, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" that is to say, the words which we have preached.[1]

Though ordinarily the word doth always go before faith, yet faith doth not always follow where the word is.

Isaiah liii. 1. John xii. 38.

For whereas the Hebrew word שְׁמוּעָה, (*shemugnah*,) signifieth speech passively, the Grecians have expounded it ἀκοην, and the Latins *sermonem*, albeit improperly, yet not in any obscure or doubtful sense. Now we see why this exception was added by the way, to wit, that no man should think faith doth necessarily follow wheresoever the preaching of the word doth flourish.

Notwithstanding, he noteth the reason afterwards, when he addeth, "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" For he signifieth that there appeareth no profit or fruit of the Word, but whilst God doth shine upon us by the brightness of his Spirit, and so is the inward calling distinguished from the outward voice of man. Which inward calling is only effectual and proper to the elect. Whereby it is evident

[1] "Sermoni quem prædicamus," the word which we preach.

Digitized by Google

how foolishly some men reason, that all are indifferently elected and chosen, because the doctrine of salvation is universal, and God doth indifferently invite all men unto him; for the generality of the promise alone, of itself and by itself, doth not make salvation common and general to all. But rather this peculiar revelation, whereof the prophet maketh mention, restraineth (and tieth) it only to the elect.

17. *Therefore, faith cometh by hearing, &c.* By the conclusion we see what Paul did respect in framing that his gradation; namely, to show that wheresoever faith is, there God hath already given a manifest and evident sign of his election.

Secondly, that he had poured out his blessing by the ministration of the gospel, that he might lighten the minds of men by faith, and by the same faith also might prepare them to call upon his name, wherein salvation is promised to all. And that by this means it was testified how the Gentiles were admitted by him into the fellowship of the eternal inheritance. And this [is] a worthy and excellent place concerning the (virtue and) efficacy of preaching, because he doth testify that faith proceedeth and springeth from it. He confessed truly of late, that of itself it profiteth nothing; but where it pleaseth the Lord to work, this is the instrument of his power. And truly both the voice of man is unable by his own virtue to pierce into the soul, and also man, who is mortal, would be too proud if he were said to have power to regenerate us; and also the light of faith is a more high and excellent thing than that it can be given and bestowed by man. And yet all this doth not hinder but God may work effectually by the voice of man, so that he may beget in us faith by his ministry.

Furthermore, we must note that faith is not grounded upon any other doctrine than (upon the Word of God;) for Paul doth not say that faith doth proceed from every doctrine, but he restraineth it by express words to the Word of God; which restraint were absurd, if faith might lean or stay itself upon the decrees of men. Therefore, all the invention of man must cease, when as the certainty of faith is

Faith is grounded upon the word of God only.

Digitized by Google

handled; by this means also doth that Papistical dream and fancy of intricate and entangled faith fall flat to the ground, which severeth (and distracteth) faith from the Word. And much more that execrable and cursed blasphemy, which would have the authority of the Word to hang wavering and doubtful, till such time as the authority of the church doth stay and establish it.

18. *But I demand, Have they not heard? Yea, truly their sound is gone into all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world.*
19. *But I demand, Hath not Israel known? First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to envy by a nation that is not my nation, and I will anger you by a foolish nation.*
20. *And Esay is bold, and saith, I was found of them who sought me not; I was made known to them who did not ask after me.*
21. *But of Israel he saith, I have stretched out my hands daily to a proud and rebellious* [or not believing] *people.*

18. *But I say, Have they not heard? &c.* Seeing that by preaching the minds of men are endowed with the knowledge of God, which, of itself, breedeth and bringeth forth the invocation and calling upon the same God, it remained to be examined whether the truth of God were ever declared and preached to the Gentiles or no; for in that Paul turned to the Gentiles upon the sudden, there was no small offence taken at this his sudden change and alteration.[1] Therefore, he asketh this question, whether God had never directed and sent his voice before the Gentiles, and performed the duty of a teacher towards the whole world.

Furthermore, to the intent he might show how the school is generally free and open to all, into the which God doth gather to him scholars from every place, he citeth the testimony of the prophet, which in appearance doth seem to make little to the matter; for the prophet speaketh not there of the apostles, but of the dumb works of God. In

[1] "Nam quod repente se ad Gentes contulerat Paulus, in ea novitate non levis erat offensio." For when Paul had suddenly betaken himself to the Gentiles, there was no small offence in that novelty.

Digitized by Google

Ps. xix. 5. which he saith, the glory of God shineth so evidently, as that they may be said to have their certain tongue to declare the virtues of God.

This place of Paul hath caused the ancient writers to expound that whole Psalm allegorically, whose steps the posterity hath also followed. So that, without contradiction or controversy, the sun compared to a bridegroom going out of his chamber was Christ; and the apostles were understood by the heavens. They who were more religious, and behaved themselves more modestly in the interpretation of the Scripture, do think that it was properly spoken of the building and frame of the heavens, and that Paul did transfer it to the apostles by way of allusion; but because I find that the servants of God handled the Scriptures everywhere with more reverence, and that they wavered not hither and thither so licentiously, I cannot be persuaded that Paul abused this place in such sort; therefore, I take this his allegation[1] in the proper and natural sense or meaning of the prophet, so that the argument may be this, namely, that God hath made his Deity manifest to the Gentiles, even from the beginning of the world, albeit not by the preaching of men, yet by the testimony of his creatures; for, although the gospel was not then heard of among them, yet, notwithstanding, the whole frame and workmanship of heaven and earth did speak, and did glorify their Author by their preaching. It appeareth, therefore, that God, even at that time wherein he contained and kept the grace of his covenant within the people of Israel, did not withdraw his knowledge in such sort from the Gentiles, but that he did always show them some spark and light thereof. Indeed, he made himself more nearly known and manifest to his chosen people, so that the Jews might be worthily compared to domestic hearers, whom he taught familiarly by his holy mouth. Notwithstanding, because he did also speak unto the Gentiles afar off by the voice of the heavens, by this preamble[2] (or foresight) he showed that he would also make himself known at the length to the Gentiles. And yet I know

Allusion is, whether we so respect the saying or writing of another, that we also borrow some words thence, or else touch them in our own words.

[1] "Citationem," quotation. [2] "Præludio," prelude.

Digitized by Google

not why the Greek interpreter hath translated the Hebrew word קָוִם, *kauam*, φθόγγον, *a sound*; for the Hebrew word signifieth a line sometimes in building, and sometimes in writing. But concerning this present place, seeing it is sure that the same thing is repeated twice, it seemeth unto me that the heavens are brought in declaring, both by writing and speech, the power of God to all mankind. For by the words *going forth*, the prophet doth admonish us that that doctrine, whereof the heavens are the preachers and publishers, is not shut up within the narrow and straight compass of one land or region, but doth sound out into the uttermost parts (or quarters) of the world.

19. *But I demand, Hath not Israel known, &c.* This objection of the contrary part is taken from the comparison of the lesser and greater. Paul hath reasoned that the Gentiles are not to be debarred and excluded from the knowledge of God, seeing that God from the beginning, albeit obscurely, and by shadows, hath manifested himself unto them, or, at the least, hath given them some taste of his truth. What, then, shall we say of Israel, who was lightened with a far other light of doctrine? for how cometh it to pass, that profane men, and such as were strangers, should run to the light being showed them afar off; but the holy stock of Abraham should refuse the light, being familiarly and plainly seen?

For we must always retain that distinction: What nation is so renowned or famous, that it hath their gods approaching so near unto them, as thy God at this day cometh near to thee? Deut. iv. 8.

Therefore, it is not from the purpose, and impertinent to the matter, to ask this question, Why the knowledge (of God) did not consequently ensue and follow the doctrine of the law with which Israel was endued?

First, Moses saith, &c. By the testimony of Moses he proveth, that if God should prefer the Gentiles before the Jews, yet there were no absurdity therein. The place is taken out of that famous canticle in Deuteronomy, where God, upbraiding the Jews with their unfaithfulness, doth Deut. xxxii. 21.

Digitized by Google

denounce and threaten this vengeance against them, namely, that he will provoke them to emulation, by taking the Gentiles into his covenant; because that they were revolted, and fallen away to false gods. You have (saith he) despised and rejected me, and transferred and given my right and honour to idols; and I, to be revenged of this injury, in like manner will bring the Gentiles into your place, and will translate that unto them which hitherto I have given unto you. And that could not be done without the denouncing[1] of the Jews. For hereupon sprang the emulation of which Moses maketh mention, that God did appoint, or take to himself, a nation which were no nation, and did raise up a new people of nothing, who should possess the place from whence the Jews were cast and removed, even as they, the true God being forsaken, did give over themselves to idols. And although at the coming of Christ they were not fallen to that gross and external idolatry, it maketh nothing for their excuse, seeing they had profaned the whole worship of God by their inventions; yea, at the last they denied God the Father, revealed unto them in his only begotten Son Christ, which is the highest and extremest kind of impiety. Mark that these words, a *foolish nation*, and *no nation*, are the same in effect; because without the hope of eternal life there is no essence (or being) of man properly.

Finally, the beginning and original of life proceedeth from the light of faith. Therefore, the spiritual essence or being proceedeth from new creation; in which sense Paul calleth the faithful the work of God, by the which they are regenerated by his Spirit, and reformed to his own image (or likeness.) Now, by this word *foolish*, we gather all things to be mere vanity in which men be wise, without the word of God.[2]

20. *But Esaias is bold, and saith.* Because this prophecy is somewhat more plain and clear, to the intent he might procure greater attention, he foreshoweth that it is full of

[1] "Repudio," repudiation or rejection. [2] "Quicquid sine Dei verbo sapiunt homines meram esse vanitatem," that all the wisdom of men, apart from the word of God, is mere vanity.

Digitized by Google

boldness, as if he should say, the prophet did not speak figuratively or doubtingly, but, in plain and evident words, did avouch the calling of the Gentiles. And that which Paul, by inserting or interposing of a few words, hath separated in this place, is to be found jointly together in the Prophet Esay, where the Lord denounceth that the time shall come, wherein he will translate his grace to the Gentiles; and presently he addeth the reason, namely, that he was weary of the contumacy (and rebellion) of Israel, which now, by over long continuance, was become intolerable to him. Isa. lxv. 12.

Thus, therefore, he speaketh, They who inquired not of me before, and neglected my name, now have sought after me. He useth the preterperfect tense for the future, to (set down and) note the certainty of the prophecy. They who sought not after me have found above their hope and desire. I know that this place is wholly perverted by some of the Rabbins, as if God did promise that he would bring to pass that the Jews should repent, (and return) from their defection (or falling away) from God. But there is nothing more evident, than that the prophet doth speak of strangers, because it followeth by and by in the text: *I said, Behold, I am come to a people who have not called upon my name.* Therefore, without question, the prophet doth pronounce that it shall come to pass, that those should be received into the household of God by a new adoption, who beforetime were strangers. That is, therefore, the calling of the Gentiles, in which, notwithstanding the general type and figure of the calling of all the faithful doth appear. For there is no man who preventeth the Lord; but we are all without exception delivered from the bottomless pit of death by his free mercy, when there is no knowledge of him, no desire of worshipping him; to conclude, no sense or feeling of his truth.

21. *But of Israel, &c.* The cause is added, why God went to the Gentiles, to wit, because he saw his grace to be scoffed at among the Jews. But to the intent the readers might better perceive that the excecation[1] of the people was noted in the second member, Paul doth express-

[1] "Excæcationem," the blinding.

Digitized by Google

ly admonish that the chosen people are upbraided with their malice; word for word it is thus, "He saith to Israel;" but Paul hath followed the Hebrew phrase, because ל (*lamed*) is often put for מן (*min.*) And he saith, that he did stretch out his hand to Israel, whom he did daily invite unto him, both by his Word, and also ceased not to entice or allure by all kind of gentleness (and bountifulness;) for he useth these two means to call men. Seeing, whilst he doth so, he testifieth his benevolence towards them. Howbeit, he complaineth especially of the contempt of his Word;[1] which is so much the more detestable, as God doth more evidently declare his fatherly care whilst he calleth men unto himself by his Word. And it is a very significant and forcible kind of speech, namely, that he stretcheth out his hand, because, in procuring and furthering our salvation by the ministers of his Word, he doth reach forth his hands to us, as if[2] a father, being ready to take up his son lovingly into his lap, should stretch out his arms.

God doth call us unto him, not only by his word, but also by his kenity, bountifulness, and goodness, &c.

And he saith *daily*, that it should be no marvel to any man, though he were weary of doing good to them, seeing he did avail (and profit) nothing by his assiduity (or continual doing good.) This is the same figure which is in Jeremie, where he saith, that he rose up early in the morning to admonish them. Furthermore, their infidelity is set forth by two most fit names; for this participle, ἀπειθοῦντα, I think good to translate *stubborn* or *rebellious;* and yet Erasmus, and the old interpreters' translation, which turn it *not believing*,[3] is not altogether to be misliked. But seeing the prophet accuseth the people of stubbornness, and afterwards addeth, that they did err in ways which were not good, I doubt not but the meaning of the Greek interpreter was to expound the Hebrew word מורד (*mored*) by two words; first calling them a disobedient and rebellious people, afterwards a gainsaying people. For, because their contumacy did show and betray itself herein, namely, that the people did stubbornly reject the holy admonitions of the prophets, with an untamed pride and bitterness.

Jer. vii. 13, and xi. 7.

[1] "Doctrinæ," of his doctrine. [2] "Non secus quam si," just as if.
[3] "Quam ad marginem apposui," which I have put in the margin, omitted.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

1. *I demand, then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*
2. *God hath not cast away his people which he knew before. Know ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh request unto God against Israel, saying,*
3. *Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*
4. *But what saith the answer of God to him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, which have not bowed the knee unto Baal.*
5. *Even so, then, at this present time, there is a remnant, through the election of grace.*
6. *And if it be of grace, it is no more of works; or else were grace no more grace. But if it be of works, it is no more of grace; or else were work no more work.*

1. *I demand, then, &c.* That which he hath hitherto said of the cecity[1] and obstinacy of the Jews, might seem to tend unto this, as though Christ by his coming had translated the promises elsewhere, the Jews being put out from all hope of salvation. Therefore, he preventeth that objection in this place; and so moderateth that which he had said before of the rejection of the Jews, that no man should think the covenant which God made in old time with Abraham was now abrogated, or that God had so forgotten it, that the Jews now should be utterly estranged from his kingdom, as the Gentiles were before the coming of Christ. He denieth that, and will surely straightway show it to be false. Neither is this the question, whether God hath rightly or unrightly rejected his people. For, in the former chapter, it hath been proved, that when the people, through a preposterous zeal, did reject the righteousness of God, being justly punished for their pride, they were worthily blinded, and at

[1] "Cæcitate," blindness.

Digitized by Google

length cut off from the covenant. So that now the cause of their rejection is not in disputation, but the question is of another matter, namely, Although they have deserved such vengeance of God, whether yet the covenant which God made in old time with the fathers be abolished; which covenant, that it should, through any infidelity of men, be overthrown, were absurd. For Paul retaineth this principle, Seeing the adoption of God is free, and is founded upon God only, and not upon men, it doth stand firm,[1] what incredulity soever of men conspire to overthrow it; this knot must be loosed, lest the truth and election of God should be thought to depend upon the dignity of men.

For I myself am an Israelite. Before he enter into the cause, by the way he proveth, in his own example, how absurd it is to think that nation is utterly forsaken of God. For he was an Israelite from the first beginning, not a proselyte, or newly received into the commonwealth of Israel. And seeing he was worthily counted amongst the special servants of God, it is an argument that the grace of God did rest in Israel. He, therefore, taketh the conclusion as proved, which yet he will afterwards open by a necessary discourse. Whereas, besides the title of an Israelite, he calleth himself the seed of Abraham, and also expresseth his tribe, it is to the end he might be counted for a natural Israelite; as to the Philippians. Whereas some think it to serve unto the commendation of the mercy of God, that Paul came of the tribe of Benjamin, which was almost cut off, that seemeth to be forced and far-fetched.

The nation of the Jews is not utterly cast off.

Phil. iii. 4.

2. *God hath not.* It is a negative answer, and with a moderation.[2] For the apostle, in denying precisely the people to be rejected, had been contrary to himself. But by adding a correction, he teacheth that it is such a kind of rejection as the promise of God is not thereby made void. So the answer is distributed into two parts, namely, that God hath not, contrary to the faith of his covenant, rejected the whole progeny of Abraham, neither yet is the effect of

[1] "Et inviolabilem," and inviolable, omitted.

[2] "Moderatione," a restriction or reservation.

Digitized by Google

the adoption extant in all the sons of the flesh; because the secret election goeth before. So the general rejection could not make, but some seed might be saved; for the visible body of the people was so rejected, that no member should fall away from the spiritual body of Christ. If any demand, whether circumcision were not a common pledge[1] of the grace of God to all the Jews, so that they ought all of them to be counted amongst the people of God; the answer is at hand: Because the external calling by itself is ineffectual without faith, that honour is justly taken from the faithless which they refuse, being offered. So there remaineth a special people in whom God showeth a testimony of his constancy; and Paul bringeth the original of constancy from the secret election. For here God is not said to respect faith, but to stand to his purpose, that he might not reject that people whom he knew before. And here, again, that is to be noted which I admonished before, namely, that by the word *foreknow* is not understood a certain (I know not what) speculation (or beholding,) whereby God did foreknow what every one would be; but his good pleasure, whereby he chose those unto himself for sons, who, because they were not yet born, could not insinuate themselves into his favour. So to the Galatians, he saith they were known of God, because he prevented them with his favour, that he might call them to the knowledge of Christ. Now, we understand, although the universal calling doth not bring forth fruit, yet the faith of God is not fallen away, but always he conserveth a Church so long as the elect remain alive; for, albeit God doth indifferently invite the whole people unto him, yet he doth not inwardly draw any but such as he knoweth to be his, and hath given to his Son, whom, also, he will keep faithfully unto the end.

Objection.

Answer.

Foreknowledge in God is not taken for a bare and naked knowledge of a thing to be.

Gal. iv. 9.

Know you not? Seeing there were so few who of the Jews believed in Christ, it could hardly be but by the smallness of the number they should gather that the whole stock of Abraham was rejected. And this cogitation also would creep in, namely, that in so deformed a ruin there appeared

[1] "Symbolum," symbol.

Digitized by Google

no sign of God's grace. For seeing adoption was the sacred bond whereby the sons of Abraham being gathered under the faith of God, were retained in the same, except the same had fallen away, it is no way like that the people could have been so miserably and unhappily scattered. That Paul might turn away this offence, he useth a very fit example; for he showeth how, in the time of Elias, there was such a waste, so that now there was no appearance of a church; and yet when there appeared no footstep of the grace of God, the church of God did lie so hid (as it were) in a grave, that the same was wonderfully preserved. It followeth, therefore, they do naught who esteem the church by their sense. And surely if that excellent prophet, who was endued with such plenty of the Spirit, when he would by his own judgment esteem the people of God, was so deceived, what shall befal us, whose greatest sharpness, if we be compared with him, is but mere dulness? Wherefore, let us decree nothing here rashly; but rather let this abide fast in our hearts, that there is a church nourished by the secret Providence of God, when there appeareth none to our eyes. And withal, let us remember that they deal foolishly and proudly, who define the number of the elect according to the measure of their sense; for God hath a mean unknown to us, easy to himself, whereby he doth wonderfully keep his elect, when all things seem lost. And let the readers mark this, that Paul doth here and elsewhere diligently compare the state of his time with the old condition of the church, which maketh greatly to the confirmation of our faith, whilst we consider [that] nothing doth happen unto us at this day, which the holy fathers have not had experience of in old time; for we know how hard an engine newness[1] is to trouble weak minds, touching the parcel [words] in Elias. In the translation I have retained the phrase of Paul, because it may signify as much as in *the history, or in the things done by Elias;* although I think rather that Paul spake so, according to the manner of the Hebrews; because ב (*beth,*) which answereth the Greek *ἐν*, is often taken for *ὁς, of.*

The church must not be esteemed according to our sense.

In Elias, for, in the history of Elias.

[1] "Novitas," novelty.

Digitized by Google

How he maketh request unto God against Israel. This surely was an argument how much Elias esteemed of the Lord, that he doubted not, for his glory, to constitute himself an adversary to his own nation, and to wish the utter ruin thereof, because he thought the religion and worship of God was perished in it. But therein he was deceived, that he condemned the whole nation, himself only excepted, of the impiety which he would have had so severely punished. Furthermore, in the same place which Paul citeth, there is no imprecation or wishing, but a bare complaining. But because he so complaineth, that he despaireth of the whole people, no doubt but so he did bequeath them to destruction. Let us note, then, what Elias preached; namely, that when impiety had everywhere prevailed, and in a manner overspread the whole land, he thought he had been left alone. 1 Kings xix. 10.

4. *I have reserved to myself.* Howsoever you take a finite number for an infinite,[1] assuredly the Lord would note a great multitude. Seeing, therefore, the grace of God prevailed so much in things most desperate, let us not lightly condemn[2] all those whose piety doth not appear openly unto us. And withal, let this be thoroughly printed in us, that although ungodliness rage everywhere, and horrible confusion doth thrust itself in all abroad, yet the salvation of many abideth shut up under the seal of God. But lest any, under this pretence, should cocker their slothfulness, as many do seek lurking-places for their vices, from the secret preservation[3] of God, we must mark again, that they are said to be saved who abide sound and undefiled in the faith of God. And also the circumstance of judgment is to be noted; namely, that those[4] are they [that] abide safe, who have not so much as by outward dissimulation prostrated[5] their bodies to the worship of idols; for he doth not only give unto them the purity of mind, but also, that they have kept their bodies undefiled from all uncleanness of superstition. 1 Kings xix. 18. Who are saved.

[1] "Indefinito," indefinite. [2] "Adjudicemus diabolo," adjudge or assign to the devil. [3] "Custodia," charge or superintendence.
[4] "Demum," only. [5] "Prostituerunt," prostituted.

Digitized by Google

5. *Even so, then, at this present time.* He applieth the example unto his time;[1] and to the end he might make all things like, he called them a remnant, namely, in comparison of that great number whose eyes were set upon ungodliness. Although together alluding unto that testimony of Esay [which] he alleged before, he showeth that yet, in a miserable and confused desolation, the faith of God shined; because there remained some remnant. And that he might confirm that more surely, he doth precisely call those remnants, who, being left by the grace of God, do testify that the election of God is immovable; as the Lord said to Elias, when the whole people was fallen to idolatry, that he had reserved those seven thousand. Whereby is gathered, that through his benefit they were preserved from perishing. Neither doth he simply preach grace, but now also he calleth us unto election, that we might learn reverently to depend upon the secret counsel of God. One proposition, therefore, is, that but a few are saved, in comparison of the great number of them [who] take unto themselves the name of the people of God. Another, that those are saved whom he hath chosen, without respect of merit; for *election of grace*, after the Hebrew manner, is put for *free election*.

6. *If by grace now, then not of works.* This is an amplification taken from the comparing of contraries; for such is the case between the grace of God and the merit of works, that he which maintaineth the one overthroweth the other. Again, if no consideration of works can be admitted in election, which doth not obscure the free goodness of God, which he would have so greatly commended unto us therein, let those phrensied persons, which make the dignity which God foresaw in us the cause of election, see what they will answer unto Paul. For whether you shall give place unto works to come or past, this sentence of Paul will always cry out against you, which saith that grace leaveth no place for works. Paul doth not here dispute only of our reconciliation with God, neither of the means or next causes of our

[1] "Suam ætatem," his own age.

Digitized by Google

salvation, but he ascendeth higher, namely, why God, before the world was made, some being rejected, did only choose other some. And he denieth that God was brought hereunto by any other cause than his mere pleasure; for, if any place be given unto works, so much he proveth to be taken from grace. Whereby it followeth that the foreknowledge of works is wickedly mixed with election. For if God have chosen some, and rejected other some, as he foreknew them to be worthy or unworthy of salvation, now the merit (or wages) of works being put down,[1] the sole grace of God shall not reign, but shall only be in half part cause of election. For as Paul reasoned before, in the justification of Abraham, where wage is paid there grace is not freely given; so now he taketh an argument from the same fountain,[2] if works come in to be a cause, when God adopteth a certain number of men unto salvation, then wage is due; and, therefore, it is not a free benefit. And although he speak here of election, yet because it is a general reason which Paul useth here, it ought to be extended unto the whole cause of our salvation; that we might know it is so often said there is no merit of works, as our salvation is attributed to the grace of God; or, rather, that we might believe the righteousness of works is so often brought to nothing as grace is named.

Look, how much is given unto works in justification, so much is taken from grace.

7. *What then? Israel hath not obtained that [which] he sought; but the election hath obtained it, the rest have been blinded.*
8. *As it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day.*
9. *And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a net, and a stumbling-block, even for a recompence unto them:*
10. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not, and bow down their back alway.*

7. *What then?* Because he was occupied here in a hard question, he maketh a demand as though he doubted. Yet,

[1] "Posita," being assumed. [2] "In rationem veniant," are taken into account.

Digitized by Google

by this kind of doubting, he goeth about to make the answer which followeth more certain; for he insinuateth that no other can be given. And that is, namely, that Israel, in seeking salvation, laboured in vain, because he went about it by a preposterous study. Although he make here no mention of the cause, yet seeing he had expressed it before, assuredly he would also have it understood in this place; for his words are as much as if he said, Now it ought not to seem strange, that Israel, in striving unto righteousness, hath profited nothing. And thence is that brought to pass which he addeth straightway of election. For if Israel hath obtained nothing by merit, what have others obtained, whose cause or condition was no better? Whence cometh so great difference amongst equals? Here who doth not see it is election only which maketh the difference? And the signification of this word is doubtful; for it seemeth unto some to be taken collectively for the elect, that the parts of the contrariety may agree among themselves;[1] whose sentence I dislike not, so that also they grant unto me, that there is somewhat more in this word than if he had said *the elect;* namely, that he might infer how there was none other cause of obtaining than election; as if he said, Not they who labour, trusting to their merits, but they whose salvation dependeth upon the free election of God. For he doth precisely compare that remnant which was saved by the grace of God with all Israel, or the whole body of the people. Whereby it followeth, that the cause of salvation resteth not in man, but in the mere good pleasure of God.

Election put for the elect themselves.

The rest have been blinded. As the elect only are delivered from perishing by the grace of God, so, whoso are not elected must needs remain in blindness. For this is the meaning of Paul, that, touching the reprobate, the beginning of ruin and condemnation is hence, that they are forsaken of God. The testimonies which he bringeth, although they are rather gathered out of divers places of the Scripture than taken out of one place, yet all of them seem to be strange from his purpose, if you weigh them more nearly by

[1] "Quo inter se membra antitheses eos respondeant," that the members of the antithesis may correspond.

Digitized by Google

their circumstances; for everywhere you may see excecation and hardening to be mentioned as the scourges of God, whereby he punisheth the offences of the wicked already committed. But Paul here contendeth to prove by them that they are blinded, not [those] who have already deserved it by their wickedness, but which were reprobated of God before the creation of the world. This knot thou mayest thus briefly loose, that the original of wickedness, which so provoketh the fury of God, is the perversity of nature, forsaken of God. Wherefore, not without cause hath Paul cited these testimonies of eternal reprobation, which proceedeth thence as the fruit from the tree, and river from the fountain. Surely the godless for their sins, by the just judgment of God, are punished with cecity;[1] but if we demand the fountain of their perishing, we must have recourse thither, that they, being accursed of God, can get and bring nothing by their deeds, sayings, and counsels, than [but] malediction (and curse.) Yet the cause of eternal reprobation is so secret, that nothing else remaineth for us than to wonder at the incomprehensible counsel of God, as at length we shall see by the conclusion. And they do foolishly, who, as soon as there is speech of the next causes, under pretence of them, go about to cover this first cause, which is hidden from our sense; as though God had not freely before the fall of Adam determined what he thought good of all mankind, because he doth condemn his corrupt and wicked seed; secondarily, because he doth recompense to every one particularly the reward of their wickedness which they have deserved.

The cause of eternal reprobation is a deep secret.

8. *God gave unto them the spirit.* I doubt not but the place of Esay is cited, which Luke saith in the Acts was alleged of him, yet the words being a little altered. Neither doth he here recite the words [which] are had[2] with the prophet, but only he gathereth this sentence, namely, that they are endued from above with the spirit of bitterness, that they might remain dull in seeing and hearing. Indeed,

Isa. vi. 9. Matt. xiii. 14. John xii. 40. Acts xxviii. 26.

[1] "Cæcitate," with blindness.

[2] "Habentur apud prophetam," are used by the prophet.

Digitized by Google

the prophet is commanded to harden the heart of the people; but Paul doth pierce unto the fountain, namely, that a brutish dulness doth possess all the senses, after that men are delivered into this madness, that they sharpen themselves with poisonable provocations against the truth. For he doth not only call that the spirit of giddiness, but also of compunction, namely, where a certain bitterness of gall doth declare itself; yea, also, where there is a fury in rejecting the truth. And he saith, the reprobate are made so foolish by the secret counsel of God, that they, being amazed, can judge nothing. For, in that they are said, by seeing not to see, thereby the dulness of all their senses is noted. And Paul addeth of his own, *until this day*, lest any should except that that prophecy was fulfilled long ago, and therefore was sinistrously drawn to the time of the gospel. He preventeth this objection, declaring how that excecation which is described there was not for one day only, but did continue, together with the incurable pertinacy[1] of the people, until the coming of Christ.

9. *And David saith.* In this testimony also of David, there is some changing of the words, but which doth not violate the sense. For thus he saith, "Let their table be made a snare before them, and their prosperity their ruin." There is no mention of recompence or retribution. In substance they agree sufficiently. There the prophet wisheth unto the godless that whatsoever thing is otherwise to be wished for and wholesome, might turn to their ruin and destruction. And that he noteth by *their table* and *prosperity*. Secondly, he bequeatheth[2] them into the cecity of spirit, and enervation (or weakening) of strength; the one whereof he signifieth by the darkening of their eyes, the other by the bowing of their back. Furthermore, it is no marvel though it be extended almost unto the whole nation, seeing we know that not only the chiefest were enemies unto David, but also the common people were against him, so that it may easily appear how those things which are read there do not serve

Ps. lxix. 22, 24.

[1] "Pertinacia," obstinacy. [2] "Devovet," dooms them.

Digitized by Google

only to a few, but unto a multitude. Yea, if we consider whose image David was, there shall also be an easy spiritual sense in the contrary member. Seeing, then, this imprecation abideth for all the adversaries of Christ, that their meat should be turned into poison to them, (as we see the gospel is unto them the savour of death unto death,) let us embrace the grace of God with humility and fear. Add, also, that seeing David spake of the Israelites, who were begotten of Abraham according to the flesh, and who then obtained the first place in the kingdom, Paul doth fitly apply his testimony unto this matter, lest the excecation of a great part of the people should seem new or strange.

For spiritual sense, the author hath anagoge, which is, when one ascendeth from an earthly and base matter, unto an heavenly and high meaning.

11. *I demand then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid. But by their fall salvation cometh unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to follow them.*
12. *Wherefore, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more shall their abundance be?*
13. *For I say unto you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:*
14. *If by any means I might provoke them of my flesh to follow, and might save some of them.*
15. *For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving be, but life from the dead?*

11. *Have they stumbled? &c.* Thou shalt trouble thyself greatly in this disputation, unless thou observe that the apostle sometimes speaketh of the whole nation of the Jews, sometimes but of particular men; for thence cometh that diversity, that sometimes he saith the Jews were banished from the kingdom of God, cut off from the tree, and by the judgment of God thrown into destruction; other sometimes, again, he denieth them to be fallen from grace; but rather to abide in the possession of the covenant, and to have place in the Church of God. So, then, according to this distinction, he speaketh now; for seeing the Jews, for the most part, did reject Christ, so that that perversity did, in a manner, possess the whole nation, and there appeared but few amongst them of a better mind, he demandeth,

A note for the better understanding of the whole disputation.

Digitized by Google

whether the nation of the Jews had so stumbled, that it were for ever to be despaired of, neither were there any hope of repentance left. And here he worthily denieth the salvation of the Jews to be past hope, or that they are so cast off of the Lord, that there is no restitution to be looked for, or that the covenant of grace is utterly extinguished, which God once made with them, seeing there remained always in that nation a blessed seed. That his meaning is thus to be understood, it appeareth by this; namely, that before he joined most sure ruin unto excecation, and now maketh hope of rising again, which two could not agree in one. Then they are fallen, and fallen to destruction, who were obstinately offended at Christ, yet the nation is not so fallen, that it should follow of necessity whoso is a Jew he is lost, or fallen away from God.

But their fall is salvation to the Gentiles. The apostle, in this place, noteth two things; namely, that the fall of the Jews turned to the salvation of the Gentiles; but to this end, that they might be kindled with a certain jealousy, and so bethink themselves of repentance. Surely he respected the testimony of Moses which he had already cited, where the Lord threateneth Israel, that as he was provoked of them through false gods unto emulation, so also, by the law of retaliation, he would provoke them with a foolish people. The word that is used there noteth the affection of emulation and jealousy; namely, that we burn when we see another preferred before us. Then if the counsel of the Lord be, that Israel should be provoked unto emulation, Israel is not therefore fallen, that he should be thrown into eternal destruction, but that the blessing of God, which was contemned of them, might come unto the Gentiles, to the end that they also at length might be stirred to seek the Lord from whom they are fallen. But there is no cause why the readers should greatly weary themselves in applying the testimony. For Paul doth not urge the proper sense of the word, but only alludeth [to] the vulgar and known manner. For as emulation provoketh the wife being rejected from her husband for her fault, that she should study to reconcile herself; so now he saith, it may come to pass, that when the

The Jews are not, therefore, rejected, that they should utterly perish.

Digitized by Google

Jews shall see the Gentiles placed in their room, they being touched with the sorrow of their divorcement, should seek for reconciliation.

12. *Wherefore, if the fall of them.* Because he had taught, that after the Jews were divorced the Gentiles entered in their stead; lest he should make the salvation of the Jews odious unto the Gentiles, as though the salvation of the Gentiles stood upon the destruction of the Jews, he preventeth that false opinion, and putteth down the contrary sentence; namely, that nothing serveth more to promote the salvation of the Gentiles, than if the grace of God did flourish and abound greatly with the Jews; which thing that he might prove, he useth an argument from the less. If their fall could raise up the Gentiles, and their diminishing enrich them, how much more shall their fulness? For that was done against nature, but this should come to pass by the order of nature. Neither doth it hinder this reason, that the Word of God came unto the Gentiles after the Jews, by refusing of it, had (as it were) vomited it. For if they had received it, their faith had brought much more fruit than their infidelity brought by this occasion. For so both the truth of God had been confirmed, because it had appeared to be fulfilled in them; and they also by doctrine had brought many, whom by their stubbornness they rather turned away. And he had spoken more properly, if he had opposed *rising of the Gentiles* against the *fall of the Jews*. Which I, therefore, note lest any should seek here for the elegancy of speech, or be offended at the rudeness of speech. For these are spoken not to frame the tongue, but the heart.

If the Jews received the gospel, it should be so far from hindering, that it should greatly further the faith of the Gentiles.

13. *For I say to you Gentiles.* He proveth, by a notable reason, that the Gentiles shall lose nothing if the Jews returned again into favour with God. For he showeth that the salvation of them both is so joined together, that by one and the same work it may be promoted. For thus he speaketh unto the Gentiles, Notwithstanding I am an apostle peculiarly appointed for you, and therefore ought, in a special sort, procure your salvation committed unto me, and (as

Digitized by Google

it were) all other things laid apart to seek that only; yet I shall do my duty faithfully, if I can win any unto Christ of mine own nation; and that shall be to the glory of my ministry, and so for your wealth. For whatsoever did serve to set forth the ministry of Paul, it was an ornament to the Gentiles, whose salvation was the end thereof. And here, also, he useth the verb παραζηλωσαι, *to provoke*, that the Gentiles might seek for the event of Moses' prophecy, such as he describeth, when they should understand it to be profitable for them.

Deut. xxxii. 22.

How the minister is said to save.

14. *Might save.* Here note how the minister of the word is said in this manner to save those whom he hath brought unto the obedience of faith. For the dispensation of our salvation must be so moderated, that we know all the virtue and efficacy thereof to be in God, and give unto him due praise; yet, that we know also preaching is an instrument to bring to pass the salvation of the faithful, which, although it can profit nothing without the Spirit of God, yet the same Spirit working inwardly it doth mightily show forth his virtue.

15. *For if the rejection.* Some do lewdly corrupt this place, which many count to be obscure. In my judgment, it ought to be so understood, that it is another argument taken from the comparing of the less and greater, to this sense, If the casting off of the Jews could do so much that it should give cause to the reconciling of the Gentiles, of how much more force shall their receiving be? Ought it not even to raise from the dead? For Paul persisteth still in this, that the Gentiles have no cause of envy, as though the Jews being received into favour, their estate should be the worse. He reasoneth, therefore, that seeing God hath wonderfully brought life out of death, and darkness out of light,[1] it is much more to be looked for, that the raising again of a people, as it were, clean dead, should quicken the Gentiles. Neither letteth that which some allege, namely, that recon-

[1] "Lucem ex tenebris," light out of darkness.

Digitized by Google

ciliation differeth not from resurrection, as we do here understand resurrection, namely, whereby we are translated from the kingdom of death into the kingdom of life; for although the thing be one, yet there is less and more weight in the words, which sufficeth to the force of the argument.

16. *For if the first-fruits be holy, so is the whole lump: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.*
17. *And though some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, was graffed in for them, and made partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree;*
18. *Boast not thyself against the branches. And if thou boast thyself, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.*
19. *Thou wilt say, then, The branches are broken off, that I might be graffed in.*
20. *Well; through unbelief they are broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear:*
21. *For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

16. *For if the first-fruits.* Now, by comparing the dignity of the Jews with the Gentiles, he taketh from these pride, and pleaseth or pacifieth those as much as he can; for he showeth how the Gentiles do no way excel the Jews, if they pretend any prerogative of honour of their own; yea, if they did strive therein they should be left far behind. In which comparison we must remember that man is not compared with man, but nation with nation. Therefore, if they be compared together between themselves, herein they shall be found alike, that they are both the sons of Adam. This only is the difference, that the Jews were separated from the Gentiles, that they might be a peculiar people to the Lord. Therefore, they were sanctified by the holy covenant, and adorned with peculiar honour, wherewithal the Lord did not vouchsafe the Gentiles at that time; but because little virtue of the covenant appeared then, he biddeth us look unto Abraham and the patriarchs, with whom assuredly the blessing of God was not in vain or void. He therefore gathereth that hereditary holiness descended from them to all the posterity; which collection could not hold, if he spake of the

Digitized by Google

persons only, and rather had not regard unto the promise; for it followeth not straightway because the father was just, therefore he passeth over his honesty into his son; but because the Lord sanctified to himself Abraham upon this condition, that his seed also should be holy, and so put sanctity not only into the person of Abraham, but also into the whole kindred, thereupon Paul doth not reason amiss, that all the Jews were sanctified in their father Abraham. Finally, to prove that he bringeth two similitudes, the former being taken from the ceremonies of the law, and the other taken from nature; for the first-fruits which were offered did sanctify the whole lump;[1] likewise from the root the goodness of juice is dispersed into the branches. But the same reason have posterities with their parents of whom they come, which the lump [sowing] hath with the first-fruits, and branches with the root. Therefore, it is no marvel though the Jews be sanctified in their father Abraham. Here shall be no difficulty, if thou dost understand sanctity to be nothing else than spiritual nobility of stock, and the same not proper to nature, but which did proceed from the covenant. I confess it shall be truly said that the Jews were naturally holy, because that adoption was hereditary amongst them; but now I speak of the first nature, according to the which we know all are cursed in Adam. Wherefore the dignity of the elect people (to speak properly) is a supernatural privilege.

How the whole nation of the Jews is said to be sanctified in Abraham.

17. *And though some of the branches.* Now he toucheth the present dignity of the Gentiles, which is no other than that should be of branches, if any being taken from some other place were grafted into some noble tree; for the original of the Gentiles was (as it were) of a wild and barren olive, because they found nothing in their whole pedigree but malediction. Therefore, whatsoever glory they have, that is of the new grafting, and not of the old stock; there is, then, no cause why the Gentiles should boast themselves of any honour of theirs above the Jews. Add also, that

[1] "Conspersionem," sowing or crop.

Digitized by Google

Paul doth prudently mitigate the bitterness, not saying the whole top of the tree was cut off, but certain of the branches were broken, as God did now and then take some among the Gentiles, whom he might graft in the sacred and blessed stock.

18. *But if thou dost boast thyself, thou dost not bear the root.* The Gentiles cannot contend with the Jews of the dignity of their kindred, but they must strive with Abraham, which were too bad, seeing he is instead of a root, on the which they are borne and moved. Look, therefore, how absurd it should be for the branches proudly to boast themselves against the root; so absurd it were for the Gentiles to glory against the Jews, namely, in respect of the excellency of kindred. For Paul would have it always weighed whence the beginning of salvation is. And we know after Christ, by his coming, had pulled down the partition wall, the whole world was replenished with that grace which God before had laid up with an elect people. Whereby it followeth that the calling of the Gentiles is like to a grafting, neither did they otherwise grow up into the people of God than as they took root in the stock of Abraham.

19. *Thou wilt say, then.* In the person of the Gentiles he pronounceth whatsoever they could pretend for themselves; and that was such that it should have been so far from puffing them up, that rather it should give unto them matter of humility. For if the cutting off of the Jews was through unbelief, and the grafting in of the Gentiles by faith, what remaineth, but that by acknowledging the grace of God they might thereby be prepared to modesty and submission? For this ariseth from the nature of faith, and is proper in it, that it should beget in us the humbling of ourselves and fear; but understand that fear which is not contrary to the assurance of faith; for Paul would not have our faith to waver, or to change[1] with any doubting, much less would he have us to be overthrown[2] or to tremble.

What kind of fear true faith doth beget in us.

[1] "Alternet," alternate. [2] "Consternari," to be in consternation.

Digitized by Google

What kind of fear then shall this be? namely, as the Lord biddeth us bestow ourselves in the consideration of two things, so it is meet a twofold affection should proceed thence. For he would have the miserable condition of our nature to be still considered of us, the same can bring forth nothing but horror, weariness, anxiety, and desperation; and so it is meet we should be utterly thrown down and broken, that at length we might mourn to him. Yet that horror holdeth not from the consideration of our conceit,[1] but our minds trusting to his goodness may abide calm; that weariness hindereth not but we may enjoy full consolation in him; that anxiety and desperation letteth not but we obtain sure joy and hope with him. Therefore, he doth nothing else but oppose this fear, of the which he speaketh as a preservative against proud contempt; because, as every one taketh more unto him than is meet, so he is too secure, and at the length insolent against others; therefore, so far forth we are to fear lest our heart, being lifted up by pride, do advance itself. But he seemeth to cast a doubt of salvation, whilst he admonisheth them to take heed lest they also be not spared. I answer, seeing this exhortation serveth to the taming of the flesh, which always is insolent, yea, even in the sons of God, it derogateth nothing from the certainty of salvation. But chiefly we are to note and remember that [which] I said of late, namely, that the speech of Paul is not so much directed against private men as against the whole body of the Gentiles; amongst whom there might be many vainly puffed up, professing rather than having faith. For their cause Paul (not amiss) threateneth cutting off to the Gentiles, as we shall see afterwards again.

As we are not to doubt of salvation, so we must neither be secure nor insolent.

21. *For if he spared not the natural branches.* This is a most strong reason to beat down all security. For the rejection of the Jews ought never to be remembered but it should pierce and shake us with horror. For what was it [that] did destroy them, but that through the reckless security of that pre-eminence they had gotten, they contemned

[1] "Cæterum nihil obest horror ille a nostræ recognitione conceptionis," but that horror is no obstacle to the recognition of our conception.

Digitized by Google

the judgment of God? They were not spared when they were natural branches; what, then, shall become of us, being wild and foreign, if we wax proud above measure?[1] But this cogitation, as it prepareth us unto distrust of ourselves, so it causeth us that we cleave faster and more surely to the goodness of God. And here, again, it appeareth more certainly that the speech is generally directed unto the body of the Gentiles; because this cutting off, of the which he speaketh, could not agree unto private men, whose election is immutable, namely, being founded upon the eternal purpose of God. Therefore Paul denounceth against the Gentiles if they advance themselves against the Jews, that there is prepared a reward for their pride, because God will again reconcile to himself that former people with whom he made a divorcement.

22. *Behold, therefore, the lenity and severity of God: towards them which have fallen, severity; but towards thee lenity, if thou dost abide in his lenity: otherwise thou shalt also be cut off.*

23. *And they, if they abide not in their unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.*

24. *For if thou wast cut out of the olive tree, which was natural to thee, and wast graffed, contrary to nature, in a right olive tree: how much more shall they which are by nature be graffed in their own olive tree?*

22. *Behold, therefore.* By putting down the thing itself, yet he doth more clearly and amply confirm that the Gentiles have none occasion to be proud. They do see in the Jews an example of God's severity, which ought to fear them; but in themselves they have a testimony of his grace and goodness, whereby they ought to be provoked unto thankfulness only, and to praise the Lord and not themselves. These words, therefore, are as much as if he said, If thou dost triumph at their calamity, first remember what thou wast; for the same severity of God did hang over thy head, but that thou wast delivered by his free mercy.

[1] "Si ultra modum insolescamus," if we become excessively insolent.

Digitized by Google

Secondly, Consider also what thou art now; for thou shalt not otherwise be saved, than if thou acknowledge the mercy of God with humility; but if thou, forgetting thyself, dost insolently triumph, the same ruin doth abide for thee into the which they are fallen. For it is not enough to have once embraced the grace of God, unless through the whole course of life thou dost follow his calling; for they who are illuminated of the Lord must always think of perseverance, seeing they abide not in the goodness of God who, after they have some time answered his calling, at length begin to despise the kingdom of God; and so, by their unthankfulness, deserve to be blinded again. Furthermore, he doth not one by one speak unto every one of the godly, but (as we said before) he compareth the Gentiles together with the Jews. Indeed, it is true that every [one] of the Jews did receive the reward of their incredulity, when they were banished from the kingdom of God, and whoso of the Gentiles were called they were the vessels of the mercy of God; but, in the meanwhile, the counsel of Paul is to be holden.[1] For he would have the Gentiles to depend upon the eternal covenant of God, that they might join their salvation with the salvation of the elect people. Again, lest the rejection of the Jews should breed offence, as though their old adoption were void, he would have them terrified by the example of punishment, that they might reverently have that judgment in admiration. For whence cometh so great licentiousness of curious disputations, but that we do almost neglect those things which ought worthily to instruct us unto humility? and because he disputeth not of every one of the elect particularly, but of the whole body, a condition is added, *if they shall abide in his lenity.* Indeed, I confess so soon as any abuseth the goodness of God he is worthy to be deprived of the offered grace; but improperly should this be spoken of any of the godly particularly, that God had therefore mercy on him when he chose him, if so that he did abide in his mercy; for the perseverance of faith, which maketh perfect the effect of the grace of God in us,

It sufficeth not to have begun well.

[1] "Sed tenendum interea Pauli consilium est," but, meanwhile, Paul's design must be attended to.

Digitized by Google

proceedeth from election. Paul, therefore, teacheth that the Gentiles are received into the hope of eternal life upon this condition, that by their thankfulness they should hold the possession of it. And surely that horrible defection of the whole world which followed afterwards, doth plentifully testify how this admonition was not in vain. For when God had almost in a moment so watered far and wide with his grace, that religion flourished everywhere, shortly after the verity of the gospel vanished, and the treasure of salvation was taken away. And whence came so sudden a change, but because the Gentiles were fallen from their calling?

This is a necessary watchword in all ages.

Otherwise thou shalt also be cut off. Now we understand in what sense Paul threateneth unto them cutting off, whom before he confesseth to be grafted into the hope of life by the election of God. For, first, albeit this cannot happen to the elect, yet they stand in need of such exhortation to tame the pride of the flesh; which, as it is in truth contrary to their salvation, so ought it to be terrified with the fear of damnation. As Christians, therefore, are illuminated by faith, they hear to their assurance that the calling of God is without repentance; but as they carry the flesh about with them, which wantonly kicketh against the grace of God, by this speech they are taught unto humility, *take heed thou be not cut off.* Howbeit that resolution which I brought is to be remembered, namely, that Paul speaketh not here of the particular election of every one, but opposeth the Jews to the Gentiles; and, therefore, in these words he doth not so much speak unto the elect, as unto such as did falsely boast themselves to have gotten the place of the Jews. Yea, he speaketh unto the Gentiles together, and generally the whole body, wherein many were only in title faithful and the members of Christ. Whereas the demand is made of particular men, how any may be cut off from the grafting, and how, after the cutting off, he may be grafted in again, set before thee a threefold form of grafting, and a twofold form of cutting off. For the children of the faithful are grafted in, to whom the promise is due by the covenant made with their fathers; secondly, they are also grafted in who conceive the seed of the gospel in them, but which either taketh no root, or else

A threefold form of grafting, and a twofold form of cutting off, to be considered.

Digitized by Google

is choked before it come unto fruit; thirdly, the elect are grafted in, namely, who are illuminated by the immutable purpose of God unto eternal life.

The first sort are cut off when they refuse the promise given to their fathers, or else do not receive it through their unthankfulness. The second, when the seed of the gospel withereth, and is corrupted in them. The peril of which evil, seeing it hangeth over all men, in respect of their nature, we must confess that this admonition which Paul useth doth, in some sort, appertain unto the faithful, lest they should cocker themselves in slothfulness of the flesh; but concerning the present place it ought to suffice us, that the same punishment which God executed upon the Jews is denounced against the Gentiles, if they shall become like unto them.

23. *For God is able.* This were a cold argument with profane men; for howsoever they grant power unto God, yet, because they behold it afar off, as though it were included in heaven, they do, for the most part, deprive it of his [its] effect; but because the faithful, as often as they hear the power of God to be named, do behold it as a present work, he thought this reason sufficient to pierce their minds. Add also, that he taketh this as a maxim granted; namely, that God did so punish the unbelief of the people that yet he forgot not his mercy, as else often, after he had seemed to have banished the Jews from his kingdom, he restored them again. And by comparison he showeth how much more easily the present state of things might be undone than it was done; namely, how much more easy it is that the natural branches, if they were put in their place whence they were cut, should take substance from their own root, than [that] wild and barren branches should do it of another. For the same proportion was between the Jews and the Gentiles.[1]

25. *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this*

[1] "Ea enim proportio erat inter Judæos ac Gentes," for that was the proportion or state of the case between the Jews and Gentiles.

Digitized by Google

mystery, lest ye should be arrogant in yourselves ; that cecity is partly come to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26. *And so all Israel shall be saved : as it is written, The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and he shall turn away the ungodliness from Jacob :*

27. *And this shall be my covenant to them, when I shall take away their sins.*

25. *I would not have you ignorant.* Here he prepareth his auditors unto greater attention, whilst he professeth that he will utter a thing which otherwise is secret. Neither doth he that without a cause; for he goeth about to conclude this exceeding hard question in a brief and plain sentence, and yet he openeth that [which] no man would ever have looked for; but the causal particle, *lest ye should be arrogant in yourselves*, doth declare what his purpose is now; namely, to bridle the insolence of the Gentiles, lest they should wax proud against the Jews. Furthermore, this admonition was very necessary, lest the falling away of that people should trouble the weak above measure, as though the salvation of them all were for ever to be despaired of. Although the same at this day is no less profitable for us, to the end we might know that the salvation of a number left, which the Lord at length will gather unto himself, lieth hid, as it were sealed with a signet.

And so often as longer delay shall put us in despair thereof, let us remember the name of mystery, whereby Paul clearly admonisheth that the manner of their conversion shall neither be common nor usual; and, therefore, they do lewdly who shall go about to measure it by their own sense; for what is more peevish than to count that incredible which is removed from our sense? seeing it is, therefore, called a mystery, because it is incomprehensible until the time of revelation. Furthermore, it is opened to us, as to the Romans, that our faith being content with the Word, might support us with expectation, until the effect itself come to light.

That cecity hath partly. I suppose the word *partly* neither

Digitized by Google

simply to respect the time nor multitude; but I understand it to be put for *in a sort*. By which particle he seemeth unto me only to go about to temper a word otherwise bitter (or sharp) by itself. And the word *until* doth not infer the proceeding, or order of time, but rather is as much as if it were said, *that the fulness of the Gentiles, &c.*

The meaning, then, shall be, that God did so in a sort blind Israel, that whilst they refuse the light of the gospel it might be translated to the Gentiles; and they might occupy the possession [which] was empty. Therefore, this cecity serveth the providence of God, to work the salvation of the Gentiles which he had ordained. And the fulness of the Gentiles is taken for a great concourse; for it was not then as before, that some few proselytes did assemble themselves to the Jews; but there was such a change, that the Gentiles almost made the substance or body[1] of the Church.

What is meant by the fulness of the Gentiles.

26. *And so all Israel.* Many understand this of the people of the Jews, as though Paul said that religion should be restored again amongst them as before; but I extend the name of Israel unto all the people of God, to this sense, when the Gentiles shall be come in, the Jews also shall turn from their defection unto the obedience of faith; and so the salvation of the whole Israel of God shall be fulfilled; which Israel must be gathered of them both, yet so that the Jews have the first place, as the first-born in the house of God. This interpretation doth, therefore, seem unto me more convenient, because Paul here goeth about to note the consummation of the kingdom of Christ, which is not included in[2] the Jews, but comprehendeth the whole world. In the same manner, to the Galatians, he calleth the Church, consisting together of Jews and Gentiles, the Israel of God, by that opposing the people gathered from the dispersion to the carnal sons of Abraham, who were fallen away from his faith.

Gal. vi. 16.

As it is written. By this testimony of Esay he doth not confirm the whole sentence, but one member only; namely,

[1] "Solidum fere ecclesiæ corpus," almost the entire body of the church.
[2] "Terminatum," confined to.

Digitized by Google

that the sons of Abraham are partakers of redemption. For if any take it, that Christ was promised and offered to them, but because they did refuse him they were deprived of his grace, the words of the prophet express more; namely, that there is some number left, which, after it repenteth, shall enjoy the grace of deliverance. And yet Paul citeth not word for word, that [which] is read with Esay, "The Redeemer" (quoth he) "shall come to Zion, and they which shall repent from iniquity in Jacob," saith the Lord. But it becometh not us to be too curious herein; for this is to be regarded, how fitly the apostles apply unto their purpose whatsoever probations they bring out of the Old Testament, seeing they coveted nothing else than, as it were, by the finger, to point out, that the readers might be led unto the fountain. Isa. lix. 20.

Furthermore, although, in this prophecy, deliverance be promised unto the spiritual people of God, under whom the Gentiles are contained, yet, because the Jews are the first-begotten, that which the prophet denounceth must needs be chiefly fulfilled in them; for in that the Scripture calleth all the people of God Israelites, that is ascribed to the excellency of that nation which God preferred before all others. Secondly, He saith, that he which shall redeem shall come, namely, unto Zion, having respect unto the old covenant. He addeth, also, that he shall be redeemed in Jacob, which he shall turn from his transgression. In which words, God doth plainly challenge unto himself a certain seed, that the redemption might be effectual in the elect and peculiar nation.

And albeit the phrase of speech which the prophet useth did serve better to the purpose, namely, *Shall come to Zion*, yet Paul made no religion in the matter,[1] to follow the common received translation, where it is said, "The Redeemer shall come out of the hill of Zion." And there is also like reason of the second part, *He shall turn iniquities from Jacob;* for Paul thought it sufficient only to respect Isa. lix. 20.

[1] "Paulo tamen religio fuit translationem vulgo receptam sequi," Paul did not think it necessary religiously (or scrupulously) to follow the commonly received translation.

Digitized by Google

this, (because the proper office of Christ is to reconcile unto God a people that is a revolter from the Lord, and covenant-breaker,) that undoubtedly there was some conversion to be hoped for, lest they should all perish together.

27. *And this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.* Notwithstanding Paul had briefly touched, in the former prophecy of Esay, the office of the Messias, yet that he might advertise the Jews what they were principally to hope for of him, he purposely addeth these few words out of Jeremiah to the same end; for in the former place is not read that a new covenant should come. This also appertaineth to the confirmation of the cause he hath in hand; for that which he spake of the conversion of the people, in so obstinate a stubbornness, might seem incredible; therefore, he removeth this impediment, by saying the new covenant consisteth in the free remission of sins. For it may be gathered out of the words of the prophet, that God hath no more to do with an apostate people, but so far as he shall as well remit the crime of their faithlessness as other sins.

Jer. xxxi. 33, and Heb. viii. 8, and x. 16.

28. *As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes.*
29. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*
30. *For you also were faithless towards God, but now have obtained mercy through their unbelief:*
31. *So they now are become unbelievers, because ye have obtained mercy, that they also may obtain mercy.*
32. *For God hath shut all under* [un]*belief, that he might have mercy on all.*

28. *As concerning the gospel.* He showeth how that which was evil in the Jews did not serve to the end that they should therefore be contemned of the Gentiles; unbelief was the chief crime in them. And Paul showeth they were so for a time, through the providence of God, blinded, that a way might be made for the gospel unto the Gentiles; and yet they not for ever excluded from the grace of God. He confesseth, therefore, that presently they were alienated

Digitized by Google

from God by occasion of the gospel, that this way that salvation which was laid up with them might come unto the Gentiles, and yet God not [be] unmindful of that covenant which he made with their fathers, and wherein he testified that in his eternal counsel he loved that nation. And this he proveth by a notable sentence, namely, that the grace and calling of God cannot be void. For this is the meaning of these words.

29. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* He hath put gifts and calling, by the figure *hypallage*, for the benefit of calling. Neither ought this to be understood of every particular calling, but of that whereby God adopted the posterity of Abraham into covenant, seeing the disputation was specially of this, as a little before, under the name of election, he noted the secret counsel of God, whereby the Jews were distinguished from the Gentiles. For this is to be observed, that the question is not of the private election of every one, but of the common adoption of an whole nation, which for a time, in outward appearance, might seem to be fallen, but not cut down by the roots. Because the Jews were fallen from their prerogative, and salvation promised them, that there might be some hope of the remnant, Paul proveth that the counsel of God standeth firm and immutable, whereby he vouchsafed once to choose them unto himself for a peculiar people. If, then, it cannot be that the Lord should fall from that covenant which he established with Abraham, "I will be the God of thy seed," he hath not utterly taken his favour from the people of the Jews; he doth not oppose the gospel to election, as though they were contrary one to the other (for whom God hath chosen, those he calleth) but because the gospel was suddenly, beside the expectation of the world, published to the Gentiles, he worthily compareth this grace with that old election of the Jews, which so many ages before was manifested. Election, therefore, is named of antiquity, because in that part of the world [which] is past, God did choose unto himself one people.

Paul, in this disputation, speaketh of the general calling of a whole nation, and not of the particular calling of every one.

Gen. xvii. 7.

Digitized by Google

He saith, *for the fathers*, not as though they gave any cause of love, but for that the grace of God descended from them to the posterity, according to the form of the covenant, "Thy God, and of thy seed." How the Gentiles have obtained mercy by the unbelief of the Jews it is already declared, namely, God, being angry with the Jews for their infidelity, converteth his favour unto the Gentiles. And whereas it is straightway added they became incredulous for the mercy showed to the Gentiles, it is something hard, yet there is no absurdity in it; because Paul doth not set down the cause of their excecation or blinding, but only showeth that that was taken from the Jews which God translated to the Gentiles.

How it is said the Jews became unbelievers through the mercy shown to the Gentiles.

Furthermore, lest the Gentiles should think that they obtained that by the merit of their faith which the Jews lost through their incredulity, there is only mention made of mercy. The sum, therefore, is, Because God would show mercy upon the Gentiles, by this occasion the Jews were deprived of the light of faith.

32. *For God hath shut up, &c.* A notable sentence, whereby he declareth there is no cause why they should despair of others which have some hope of salvation, for whatsoever they are now they were as all others are; so, then, if through the only mercy of God they have escaped forth from unbelief, they ought to leave place unto the same mercy for others also. For, as concerning guiltiness, he maketh the Jews equal with the Gentiles, that both of them might understand the way to salvation is open to others as well as unto them; for there is one only mercy of God which saveth, and that may offer itself unto them both. This sentence, therefore, answereth that testimony of Osee, which he cited before: "I will call that my people [which] was no people." Moreover, his meaning is not that God doth so blind all men as though their incredulity were to be imputed to him; but by his Providence he hath so disposed it, that all should be guilty of incredulity, and so he might have them subject to his judgment; to this end,

Hosea ix. 25.

Digitized by Google

verily, that all merits being buried, salvation might be of his only goodness. Here, therefore, Paul intendeth two things; first, that there is nothing in any man wherefore he should be preferred before others, besides the mere grace of God; and, secondly, that God in the dispensation of his grace is not let but he may bestow the same upon whom he will. There is an emphasis in this word *mercy*, for it signifieth that God is tied to none, and therefore doth save all freely, because all are in like sort lost. Furthermore, their dotage is too gross who gather from hence that all shall be saved; for Paul meaneth simply, that as well Jews as Gentiles are saved no other way than by the mercy of God, lest he should leave unto any some matter of complaint. And sure it is, this mercy is offered indifferently unto all, but which[1] [that is, those who] seek it by faith.

33. *O the deepness of the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*
34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been of his counsel?*
35. *Or who hath given to him first, and it shall be restored him again?*
36. *Because all things are of him, and by him, and for him. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

33. *O the deepness!* Here, first of all, the apostle bursteth forth into a speech which voluntarily ariseth from the consideration of the works of God with the faithful. Secondarily, he doth by the way restrain the boldness of impiety, which is wont to murmur against the judgments of God. Therefore, when we hear, *O the deepness!* it cannot be said how available this admiration ought to be to beat down the temerity of the flesh. For after he had disputed out of the Word and Spirit of the Lord, at length, being overcome with the highness of so great a secret, he can do nothing but wonder and cry out, that these riches of the wisdom of God are deeper than our reason is able to pierce

[1] "Sed qui," provided they.

Digitized by Google

into them. If, therefore, at any time we enter into talk of the secret counsels of God, let this bridle be put always before our wit and tongue, that when we have spoken soberly, and within the bounds of the Word of God, at length our disputation [may] end with an admiration. Neither ought we to be ashamed, if we be no wiser than he, who, being wrapt even into the third heaven, had seen secrets not to be opened unto man; yet here could find no other end than so to humble himself. Whereas, some resolve the words of Paul thus: *O the deep riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God!* as though the noun *deep* were put for a common epitheton, expounding riches for liberality, it seemeth unto me to be wrested. Therefore, I doubt not but he extolleth the deep riches of wisdom and knowledge in God.

How incomprehensible! By divers words, according to the usual iteration of the Hebrews, he expresseth the same thing. For having spoken of *judgments*, he addeth *ways* for the rules or reason of doing, or order of governing of his judgments. And still he persisteth in his exclamation, wherein the more he extolleth the highness of the secrets of God, the more he frayeth[1] us from the curiosity of searching. Let us learn, therefore, to search after nothing in the Lord, but which he hath revealed by his Scriptures, for otherwise we enter into a labyrinth, whence there is no easy passage; for it is to be noted that here the question is not of every the mysteries of God,[2] but of those which, being laid up within himself, he will have only to be wondered at and reverenced of us.

Way is put for the reason or manner of God's judgment.

34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* Here he beginneth, as it were, by laying hands on them, to bridle the boldness of men, lest they should murmur against the judgments of God; and that he doth by two reasons. The first is, that all men are altogether blind to consider the predestination of God by their own sense; and to dispute of a thing that is unknown is temerity and wickedness. The second reason is, that we have no cause to complain of God,

[1] "Deterret," deters.

[2] "De quibuslibet Dei mysteriis," of all divine mysteries whatsoever.

Digitized by Google

seeing no man can say that God is a debtor unto him; but, on the contrary, all men are bound unto him for his bountifulness.

What moderation must be used in speaking of the mysteries of God.

Let every one, therefore, remember to keep his mind within this compass, lest, in seeking after predestination, he be carried above the revealed will of God, seeing we hear that man can judge no more herein than the blind in darkness. Which, nevertheless, maketh not to shake the certainty of faith, which ariseth not of the dexterity of man's wisdom, but of the only illumination of the Spirit. For even Paul himself, in another place, after he hath testified that all the mysteries of God do far exceed the capacity of our understanding, straightway addeth that the faithful understand the mind of the Lord; because they have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is given them of God; by the which they are taught of his goodness, which otherwise is incomprehensible. Therefore, as we are not able by our own strength to find out the secrets of God, so by the grace of the Holy Spirit we have access into the sure and clear knowledge of them. Now, if it be our parts to follow the Spirit, our guide, wheresoever the same leaveth us, there we are to stay, and, as it were, stand still. If any covet to know more than he hath revealed, he shall be overcome with the brightness[1] of that inaccessible light. That distinction which I brought of late, between the secret counsel of God and his revealed will in the Scripture, is to be remembered. For albeit all the doctrines of the Scripture, in highness, exceed the wit of man; yet is not the way thereunto shut up against the faithful, which do reverently and soberly follow the Spirit for their guide. But there is another consideration of his secret counsel, the depth and height whereof cannot, by searching, be come unto.

Isa. xl. 13. 1 Cor. ii. 16.

35. *Who hath given to him first?* Another reason whereby the righteousness of God is mightily defended against all the accusations of the wicked. For if no man hath by his

[1] "Immenso fulgore," the immeasurable brightness.

Digitized by Google

merits bound God unto him, then none can justly expostulate with him because he hath not received a reward. For he that will force any to do him good, must needs show his merits whereby he hath deserved so at his hands. This is, then, the meaning of the words of Paul: God cannot otherwise be charged with unrighteousness, unless it be said that he giveth not to every one their own; but it is evident that none is defrauded of his right by him, seeing he is bound to no man; for what man can boast of any work of his whereby he hath merited his favour? And this place is worthy to be noted, wherein we are taught that it is not in our power, by our good works, to provoke the Lord to save us; but he preventeth us, being unworthy, by his mere goodness. For he doth not only show what men are wont to do, but what they are any way able to do. If so be that we would diligently examine ourselves, we should not only find that God is not indebted to us, but that we altogether are subject to his judgment; so that we have not only deserved no favour at his hands, but also are more than worthy of eternal death. And Paul doth not only gather that he is no debtor unto us, because of our corrupt and contaminated nature; but also, though man were perfect, yet he denieth that he could bring any thing at all before God whereby he might win his favour; for so soon as man beginneth to be, even by the right of creation he is so bound unto his Creator that he hath nothing of his own. In vain, therefore, shall we go about to take from him his right, that he may not freely, according to his pleasure, deal with his own workmanship, as though there were a mutual regard of something received and bestowed.

36. *Because all things are of him and by him.* This is a confirmation of the former sentence. For he showeth it is far off that we should be able to glory in any good thing of our own against God, seeing we were created by him of nothing, and in him have our present being. Hereby he gathereth it to be meet that our being should be directed to his glory. For how unorderly a dealing were it, that the creatures which he hath made and conserveth should be

Digitized by Google

otherways employed than to the setting out of his glory? I know this particle εἰς αὐτον, to be taken sometimes for ἐν αὐτῳ, yet abusively.[1] But seeing the proper signification seemeth[2] best to the present argument, it is better to receive it than to flee unto that which is improper. The sum is, That the whole order of nature is everted and overthrown, if the same God which is the beginning of all things be not also the end.

To him be glory. Now he doth boldly take unto him the proposition, as though it were proved, for an infallible proposition, namely, that the glory of God ought every way [to] abide immoveable. For it shall be a cold sentence if you take it generally; but the force consisteth upon the circumstance of the place, namely, that God doth challenge unto himself an absolute authority, and that in the estate of mankind, and all the world, nothing is to be sought for but his glory; whereupon it ensueth that those cogitations are absurd, and far from reason, yea, they are mad, whatsoever they be, [that] tend to the diminishing of his glory.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *Therefore, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye give your bodies a lively sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*
2. *And fashion not yourselves to this world, but be ye changed in the renewing of your mind; that ye may prove what is the good will of God, acceptable and perfect.*

After that Paul had handled those things, at the which it was meet he should begin, in the erecting of the kingdom of God, namely, that righteousness is to be sought for of God only; that salvation must come unto us by his only

[1] "Abusive," improperly. [2] "Quadret," squares or accords.

Digitized by Google

mercy; that the sum of all good things is laid up for us, and daily offered in Christ only; now, very aptly, he passeth unto the reformation of manners. Seeing by that healthful[1] knowledge of God and Christ, the soul is, as it were, regenerated into a celestial life; and by godly exhortations and precepts the life itself is, after a sort, framed and fashioned. For in vain dost thou go about to show the (practice or) study of composing and ordering the life, if first thou dost not show unto men that the original of all righteousness is in God and Christ; which is to raise them from the dead. And this is the principal difference of the gospel and philosophy. For albeit the philosophers do intreat of manners very excellently, and with great commendation of wit, yet, notwithstanding, whatsoever beauty appeareth in their precepts, it is like a fair building of an house without a foundation; because the principles being omitted, they propound a maimed doctrine, not unlike a body without a head. Neither is the manner of teaching used in Popery much unlike. For although, by the way, they make mention of the faith of Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, yet it is apparent how they come nearer unto profane philosophers than unto Christ and his apostles. And as the philosophers, before they put down laws touching manners, intreat first of the end of goodness, and search out the original of virtues, whence afterward they draw and derive all duties; so here Paul setteth down the original whence all the parts of holiness follow, namely, that we are redeemed of the Lord to this end, that we should consecrate ourselves and all our members to him. But it is necessary to examine every part.

1. *I beseech you, by the mercies of God.* We know that godless men do exceedingly abuse unto the dissoluteness of the flesh, whatsoever is spoken in the Scripture of the goodness[2] of God. Again, hypocrites, as though the grace of God extinguished the study of a godly life, and opened the door of boldness to sin, they do maliciously, as much as in

[1] "Salvifica," saving.

[2] "Immensa bonitate," the boundless goodness.

Digitized by Google

them is, obscure the knowledge of it. But this (contestation or) beseeching doth teach that men can never seriously worship God, nor be sufficiently provoked unto his fear and obedience, until they know how much they are indebted unto his mercy. The Papists count it enough, if, by terror, they wrest from men a certain (I know not what) forced obedience. But Paul, that he might bind us unto God, not with a servile fear, but with a voluntary and cheerful love of righteousness, allureth us by the sweetness of his grace, wherein our salvation is contained; and withal he chargeth us with ingratitude, unless, having experience of so bountiful and liberal a Father, we study again[1] to dedicate ourselves wholly to him. And so much the more efficacy hath Paul in this his exhortation, as he excelleth all others in setting forth the grace of God. For that heart must needs be harder than iron, which, through the doctrine he taught above, is not inflamed with the love of God, whose bountifulness towards him he feeleth to be so plentiful. Where, then, are they which think that all exhortations unto honesty of life are taken away if the salvation of men be reposed in the only grace of God, seeing a godly heart is not so much prepared unto the obedience of God by any precepts or oaths,[2] as by the serious meditating upon the goodness of God towards him? Here, also, we may see the lenity of the apostle's spirit, who had rather deal with the faithful by admonitions and friendly beseechings, than by severe commandments; because he knew he should profit more this way with those [who] are tractable.

That ye give your bodies. This is, then, the entrance of the right course unto good works, if we understand that we are consecrated to the Lord. For thereupon it followeth that we must cease to live to ourselves, to the end all the actions of our life might tend to his obedience. Therefore, here are two things to be considered; first, that we are the Lord's; secondly, that therefore we ought to be holy, because it is unseemly for the holiness of God that any thing should be offered to him which was not first consecrated to

Two things to be considered.

[1] "Vicissim," in our turn.

[2] "Nullis sanctionibus," or by any sanctions.

Digitized by Google

him. This being put down, it followeth we must meditate of holiness all our life long; yea, it is a kind of sacrilege if we fall to uncleanness; because it is nothing else than to profane a sanctified thing. And everywhere a marvellous propriety of words is kept. First, he saith our body must be offered in sacrifice unto God, whereby he insinuateth that we are not now in our own power, but altogether brought into the power of God; which cannot otherwise come to pass unless we renounce ourselves, and so deny ourselves. Secondly, by adding of *epithetons*, he declareth what kind of sacrifice that must be. For by calling it living, he signifieth, we are offered to the Lord of [on] this condition, that our former life being killed in us, we might be raised up unto newness of life. Under the name of *sanctity*, or *holiness*, he noteth that of the which we said it is proper to the sacrifice; for then it is a sacrifice indeed, when sanctification goeth before. The third *epitheton*, when he admonisheth that our life is then framed aright when we direct this our sacrifice unto the pleasure of the Lord. And, also, it bringeth unto us a rare consolation, in that he teacheth our study is pleasing and acceptable to God when we resign ourselves over to innocency and holiness. By *bodies*, he meaneth not only bones and skin, but the whole mass whereon [of which] we consist; and he hath used that word whereby he might best, by the figure *synecdoche*, set forth all our parts; for the members of the body are instruments to execute our actions by. Otherwise he requireth of us not only integrity of body, but also of spirit, as he
1 Thess. v. 23. doth to the Thessalonians. Whereas he biddeth *offer* or *present*, therein is an allusion unto the sacrifices of Moses, which are offered at the altar as in the sight of God. Howbeit he declareth[1] how ready we ought to be to receive the commandments of God, that without (all) delay we may obey them; whereby we gather that all they do nothing else but err and wander miserably, whose purpose is not to worship the Lord. Here, also, we see what sacrifices Paul commendeth to the Christian Church. For, being recon-

[1] "Eleganter ostendit," elegantly showeth.

Digitized by Google

ciled [to God] by the only sacrifice of Christ, through his grace we are all made priests, to dedicate ourselves, and all that is ours, to the glory of God. There remaineth no sacrifice of reconciliation, and it were great contumely done against the cross of Christ to erect any.

Your reasonable service. I think this clause was added, the better to explicate[1] and confirm that [which] went before; as though it were said, If you mind from your heart to serve God, give yourselves for a sacrifice to God; for this is the right service of God, from the which whoso departeth are but perverse worshippers. If God be then [only] worshipped aright, when we examine all things to his rule, let all feigned worshippings go which he doth worthily abhor; because he esteemeth more of obedience than sacrifice. Indeed, the inventions of men please them, and they brag (as Paul saith in another place) a vain show of wisdom. But we hear what the heavenly Judge denounceth of the contrary by the mouth of Paul. For by calling that a reasonable service which he commandeth, whatsoever we go about without the rule of his word, he rejecteth as foolish, sottish, and temerous[2] enterprises.

2. *And fashion not yourselves to this world.* This word *world*, albeit it hath many significations, here is taken for the wisdom and manners of men, whereunto (not without cause) he forbiddeth us to be conformed. For seeing the whole world is set on mischief, it is meet we should put off whatsoever is human, (or belonging to the old man,) if we will truly put on Christ. And lest that be doubted on [of,] he showeth it by the contrary, when he biddeth us be transformed into the newness of mind; for these are usual contrarieties[3] of the Scripture, whereby a thing is more clearly expressed.

World put for the wisdom and manners of men.

And note here what kind of innovations is required of us, namely, not of the flesh only, as the *Sorbonnites*, which take this word for the inferior part of the soul; but of the mind, which is the most excellent part of us, and whereunto the

[1] "Applicaret," apply.
[2] "Temere suscepta," rashly undertaken.
[3] "Antitheses."

Digitized by Google

philosophers ascribe the principality. For they call it ἡγεμονικον, that is, the prince or principal spirit, and reason is feigned to be a very wise queen. Howbeit Paul doth throw her out of her throne, and so bringeth her to nothing, whilst he teacheth that we must be renewed in mind; for howsoever we flatter ourselves, yet that sentence of Christ is true, that man must be born again which will enter into the kingdom of God, seeing, both in mind and heart, we are altogether void of the righteousness of God.

That ye might prove what is the will of God. Here thou hast the end wherefore we ought to put on a new mind, namely, that, both our own and all other men's counsels and desires being rejected, we might intend upon[1] the only will of God, the knowledge whereof is true wisdom. And if the renovation of the mind be necessary unto this, that we might prove what is the will of God, hereby it appeareth how contrary it is unto God. The *epithetons* [which] are added do serve unto the commendation thereof, that we might strive thereunto with greater alacrity. And surely to bring our perversity into an order, it is necessary that the true praise of righteousness and perfection be ascribed unto the will of God. The world persuadeth itself that those works [which] it hath done are good; Paul crieth out, on the contrary, that we must examine by the commandments of God what is right and good. The world delighteth itself, and taketh great pleasure, in his [its] own inventions; but Paul affirmeth that nothing pleaseth God save that which he commandeth. The world, that it might find perfection, slideth from the Word of God unto new inventions; Paul, putting perfection in the will of God, showeth how they are deluded with a false imagination if any pass that mark.

3. *For I say, by the grace which is given unto me, to every one of you, let no man stand high in his own conceit, above that which is meet for him: but let him be wise unto sobriety, as God hath given to every man the measure of faith.*

[1] "Intenti simus," be intent upon.

Digitized by Google

3. *For I say, by the grace.* If thou dost think that the particle causal is not superfluous, then this sentence shall agree well with the former. For, seeing now he would have our whole study consist in seeking for the will of God, the next thing was to draw us from vain curiosity. Yet seeing the particle causal is often superfluous with Paul, thou mayest take it for a simple affirmation; for so also the sense will stand very well.

But before he command, he saith he hath authority given him, to the end they might hearken unto him no less than unto the voice of God himself; for his words are as much in value as if he said, I speak not of myself; but being an ambassador of God, I bring unto you the commandments [which] he hath enjoined me. *By grace* (as before) he meaneth his apostleship, whereby he commendeth the goodness of God therein, and withal insinuateth that he did not temerously intrude himself, but that he was chosen by the calling of God. So then, he getting unto himself authority by this preface, doth bind the Romans with a necessity of obeying, unless they would contemn God in the person of his minister.

Grace put for apostleship.

Then followeth the precept, whereby he both draweth us from the searching of those things which do nothing but trouble men's minds, for they do not edify; and also forbiddeth lest any should take more upon him than his capacity and calling will bear; and withal admonisheth, that we only think and meditate those things which make us sober and modest. For so I had rather understand it, than according to that [which] Erasmus doth translate, *that no man think proudly of himself;* both because this sense is somewhat further fetched, and that other agreeth better to the text. This sentence, *Besides that is meet for him to understand,* declareth what he meant by the former word, ὑπερφρονεῖν; that is, to be insolent, or think above measure of himself; namely, that we exceed the measure of wisdom, or being wise, if we busy ourselves about those things of the which it is not meet we should be careful.

To be wise unto sobriety is, to be given unto those studies whereby thou perceivest thou mayest learn and be taught modesty.

What it is to be wise unto sobriety.

Digitized by Google

As God hath given every man. Unicuique ut divisit Deus. Here is the figure called *anastrophe*, or inversion of words, for, *as to every man God hath given.* And here, verily, is the manner of that sober wisdom he spake of expressed. For, seeing there is a diverse distribution of graces, then every man proposeth unto himself the best means or measure of wisdom, or being wise, when he keepeth himself within the compass of that grace or gift of faith which is given unto him. So, then, there is a superfluous seeking of wisdom, not only in superfluous things, and things unprofitable to be known; but also in those, the knowledge whereof otherwise is profitable; when we respect not what is given unto us, but temerously and boldly exceed the measure of our understanding, which importunity God will not suffer unrevenged. For we may see oftentimes with what trifles they are carried about, who through foolish ambition lift up themselves beyond those bounds [which] are set for them. The substance is, that this is a part of our reasonable sacrifice, when every one, by a gentle and tractable spirit, doth yield himself to be ruled and ordered of God. Finally, when he opposeth faith against human judgment, he restraineth us from our own likings, and withal purposely addeth the measure, that the faithful should also humbly keep themselves within the compass of their defect.

4. *For as in one body we have many members, and all members have not the same office:*
5. *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, the members one of another.*
6. *Seeing that we have divers gifts, according to the grace given unto us: whether prophecy, according to the proportion of faith;*
7. *Or ministration, in his ministry; or he which* [who] *teacheth, in doctrine;*
8. *Or he which exhorteth, in exhortation; or he which giveth, in simplicity; or he that ruleth, in diligence; or he that hath mercy, in cheerfulness.*

4. *For as in one body.* Now he confirmeth that same which he said before, of limiting the wisdom of every one

Digitized by Google

according to the measure of faith, by the calling of all the faithful. For we are called of [on] this condition, that we should, as it were, grow up into one body; seeing Christ hath ordained that society and connection amongst all the faithful which is amongst the members of a man's body; and because men could not come into such an unity by themselves, he is made the bond of that conjunction. Seeing, then, that reason which is seen to hold in a man's body ought to be also in the society of the faithful, by that similitude he proveth how necessary it is for every one to consider what is convenient for his nature, capacity, and calling. Furthermore, this similitude, [which] hath divers parts, chiefly after this manner is to be applied unto the present cause, that as the members of one body have distinct offices, and all things distinct—for no member either holdeth all offices together, or taketh unto him the offices of others—so hath God given unto us divers gifts, by which discretion (or diversity) he hath ordained what order he would have to be kept amongst us; that every one should govern himself according to the measure of his gift, and should not intrude himself into the offices of others; neither should one covet to have all things together, but being content with his state, should willingly abstain from usurping other men's turns. Howbeit, when in express words he noteth that communion which is amongst us, withal he insinuateth how great diligence there ought to be in every one to bestow those gifts [which] they enjoy to the common profit of the body.

The application of the similitude taken from the members of a man's body.

6. *We having gifts.* Paul doth not simply now preach of the maintaining of brotherly love amongst us, but he commendeth modesty, which is the moderator of our whole life. Every man coveteth to have so much, that he might not stand in need of any help of his brethren; but this is the bond of mutual communication, whilst no man hath sufficient for himself, but is constrained to borrow of others. I confess, therefore, that the society of the godly cannot stand, but whilst every one, being content with his own measure, doth impart unto his brethren of those gifts he hath received, and

The diversity and inequality of gifts is the bond of mutual communication.

Digitized by Google

again doth suffer himself to be holpen by other men's gifts. But Paul's meaning was chiefly to beat down that pride which he knew to be grafted in men; and lest any man should be grieved that all things are not given unto him, he admonisheth that not without the good counsel of God every one hath his part given unto him; because it is necessary for the common benefit of the body, that none should be so furnished with the fulness of gifts, lest he should securely despise his brethren. Here, then, we have the principal scope whereunto the apostle tendeth, namely, that all things are not meet for all men, but the gifts of God are so disposed that every one might have his finite portion; and every one ought so to intend, in bestowing his gifts to the edification of the Church, that no man, having left his own function, should take upon him another man's. For by this decent order, as it were due proportion, the incolumity of the Church is saved,[1] when every man doth so bestow that [which] he hath received to the common profit of others, that he doth not hinder others. He which perverteth this order fighteth against God, by whose ordinance it is ordained; for the difference of gifts did not spring from the will of men, but because it hath pleased the Lord so to dispose his grace.

Whether prophecy. Now, by bringing in certain particulars for example, he showeth how every man ought to be occupied in his gift, as in keeping his station; for every gift hath his [its] end proposed, from the which to decline is to corrupt the gifts themselves. And whereas the speech is somewhat confused, we may so compose it that the conclusion begin here: He, therefore, which hath the gift of prophesying, let him examine it to[2] the proportion of faith; he that hath an office, let him use it to administration; he that hath doctrine, let him use it to teach, &c.

They who shall behold this mark shall conveniently keep themselves within their bounds. Howbeit this place is diversly taken; for there be some which by *prophesying*

[1] "Hoc enim pulcherrimo ordine et hac veluti symmetria incolumitas Ecclesiæ continetur," for on this most beautiful arrangement, and, as it were, symmetry, the safety of the Church depends. [2] "Eam exigat ad," let him test it by.

Digitized by Google

understand the faculty of divination, which was of force about the beginning of the gospel in the Church, as it pleased the Lord then to set forth the dignity and excellency of his Church by all means.

And they think that that which is added, *according to the proportion* [*of faith,*] is to be referred unto all the branches. But I had rather follow them who extend this word further, namely, unto a peculiar gift of revelation, that a man do rightly and learnedly play the part of an interpreter in opening the will of God.

What prophesying is amongst Christians.

Therefore, prophesying at this day amongst Christians is almost nothing else than a right understanding of the Scripture, and singular gift of expounding the same, since all the old prophecies and oracles of God have been finished in Christ and his gospel. For in this sense Paul hath put it, when he saith, "I would ye could speak with tongues, but rather that ye did prophesy."—"We know in part, and we prophesy in part." And it appeareth not that Paul's meaning is here only to recite those marvellous graces, whereby Christ adorned his gospel at the first; but rather we see that ordinary graces only, and such as abide continually in the Church, are reckoned. Neither do I think that reason to be firm which is objected, namely, that the apostle need not to have said that to those who by the Spirit of God could not call Christ ἀνάθημα.

1 Cor. xiv. 5.

1 Cor. xiii. 9.

For seeing, in another place, he testifieth that the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet, and he biddeth him that spake first to hold his peace, if any revelation be made to another that sitteth by; after the same manner he may here admonish those who prophesy in the Church, that they should apply their prophesyings to the rule of faith, lest at any time they err from the line.

2 Cor. xiv. 32.

Faith put for the principles of religion.

Under the name of *faith* he signifieth the first principles of religion, whereunto whatsoever doctrine is found not agreeing, even thereby it is condemned for false. In the other branches there is less difficulty. He that is (quoth he) ordained a minister, let him discharge his duty by ministering,[1] that he may be answerable to his name. As straight-

[1] "Nec sibi, sed aliis in eum gradum se assumptum putet; ac si diceret.

Digitized by Google

way he commendeth unto teachers, under the name of doctrine, sound edification; in this sense, He that excelleth in doctrine, let him know that the end thereof is, that the Church be truly taught, and let him study this one thing, that he may make the Church wiser by his doctrine. For he is a doctor (or teacher) who formeth or instructeth the Church by the Word of truth. He that excelleth in the gift of exhorting, let him regard this end, that he may exhort effectually. And although these offices have great affinity, yea, and also connection between themselves, yet they cease not therefore to be divers. No man can exhort without doctrine; yet is not he that teacheth straightway endued with the gift of exhorting. Now, no man prophesieth, or teacheth, or exhorteth, but he ministereth; but it is sufficient if we keep that distinction which we see in the gifts of God, and know to be meet for the order of the Church.

8. *He which giveth, in singleness.* Out of these latter branches we see plainly that here is declared unto us what is the lawful use of the gifts of God. *By givers*, of the which he speaketh here, he understandeth not those which give of their own, but deacons, who were appointed for the distribution of the public goods of the Church. *By those* [*that*] *show mercy*, he understandeth widows, and other ministers, who, according to the custom of the old Church, were ordained to see unto the sick; for they are two divers offices, to minister necessary things unto the poor, and to bestow their labour in seeing to them. Howbeit, to the first he assigneth simplicity, whereby, without fraud and partiality, they should faithfully distribute those things [which] are committed to them, of these he would have obedience showed with cheerfulness, lest, by their morosity, (as it often cometh to pass,) they spoil their offices of grace or graciousness. For as nothing more comforteth him [who] is sick, or afflicted by any other manner of way, than when he seeth the minds of men cheerful, and ready to help him, so if he

Munus suum impleat vere ministrando," and let him consider that he was admitted to that rank not for himself, but for others, as if he had said, Let him fulfil his office by ministering truly, omitted.

Digitized by Google

see unwillingness in their countenance of whom he is holpen, he will take it to his reproach.

Although he properly call those *rulers* to whom the ministration of the Church was committed, (and they were seniors, who ruled and governed others, and exercised the censure for manners,) yet that which he saith of them may generally be applied unto all kinds of superiors; for it is no small care [that] is required of those who are to provide for the safety of all, neither is a slender diligence looked for of them who ought to watch night and day for the health of all men; although the estate of that time showeth that Paul did not speak of all superiors, (because then there were no godly magistrates,) but of the seniors, [elders,] who were the correctors of manners.

9. *Let love be without dissimulation; avoiding that is evil, and cleaving to that is good.*
10. *Being ready to love one another with a brotherly love; preventing one another with honour:*
11. *Not lither* [lazy] *in business; fervent in spirit; serving the time;*
12. *Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; persevering in prayer;*
13. *Communicating to the necessity of the saints; following after hospitality.*

9. *Let love be without dissimulation.* Now, he being about to speak of particular duties, very fitly he beginneth at charity, which is the bond of all perfection. And concerning that, he commandeth (as it is often necessary) that all dissimulations laid apart, it might proceed from pure sincerity of mind; for it is a hard matter to say how wise[1] for the most part all men are to counterfeit charity, which, indeed, they have not. For they do not only deceive others, but also themselves, whilst they persuade themselves that they are beloved very well of them whom they themselves do not only neglect, but also in truth reject. Therefore,

[1] "Ingeniosi," ingenious.

Digitized by Google

It is no charity unless it be sincere, and without dissimulation.

Paul here denounceth that only for charity, which is void of all dissimulation; and every man can easily bear witness [to] himself, whether he have any thing in the secret of his heart that is against charity. These words of *good* and *evil*, which follow straightway in the text, have not a general signification; but he hath put *evil* for that malicious iniquity, whereby men are hurt; and *good*, for that bountifulness, whereby they are holpen. And here is an usual antithesis of the Scripture, when vices are first forbidden, and virtues then commanded.

In the participle ἀποστυγοῦντες, that is, *avoiding* or *putting away*, I neither have followed Erasmus nor the old interpreter, who have turned it, *hating*, but (in my judgment) the meaning of Paul was to express somewhat more; and the vehemency in the word avoiding, or putting away, doth better answer the contrary number, where he doth not only bid that we should be bountiful, but also cleave unto it.

10. *Being ready to love one another.* He cannot persuade himself that he hath ever said enough in showing the fervency of that love whereby we ought to embrace one another. For he both calleth it brotherly, and the affection thereof στοργήν, which of the Latins is called mutual pity[1] amongst kinsfolk; and such ought that to be wherewith we embrace the sons of God. Which thing, that it might come to pass, he addeth a precept very necessary for the preserving of good-will, (or benevolence,) that every one, for his part, give honour unto his brethren; for there is no more effectual poison to the estranging or alienating of the minds of men, than when any thinketh he is despised. If by *honour* you understand all kind of duty, I am not greatly against it; howbeit, I like the first interpretation better; for as nothing is more contrary unto brotherly concord than contumely, growing of pride, when, others being neglected, every one advanceth himself, so modesty is the best nurse of love, whereby it cometh to pass that every one honoureth others.

[1] "Pietas," affection.

Digitized by Google

11. *Not lither in business.* This precept is given us, not only because the life of Christians ought always to consist in doing, but because oftentimes, our own profit being neglected, we ought to bestow our labours upon our brethren, yea, though they be not always good, but often most unworthy and unthankful.

Finally, because in many duties we ought to forget ourselves, unless we be earnest with ourselves, and diligently strive to shake off all slothfulness, we can never be truly prepared unto the obedience of Christ.

And whereas it is added, *fervent in spirit,* he showeth how we may obtain that [which] we spake on [of] before; for our flesh (like an ass) is always lither or slothful; and, therefore, had need of spurs; and it is only the fervency of the spirit that correcteth our slothfulness; therefore, the study of doing good requireth a zeal, which the Spirit of God kindleth in our hearts. Why, then, (will some say,) doth Paul exhort unto this fervency? I answer, although it be the gift of God, yet it is the part of Christians, that sluggishness being shaken off, they receive that flame which is kindled from above, as it often cometh to pass, that the motion of the Spirit is choked and extinguished by our injury.[1] Hereunto also appertaineth the third, *that we may serve the time;* for as the course of this life is short, so the opportunity of doing good is soon past; therefore, we ought more cheerfully make speed to the doing of our duty. So, in another place, Paul biddeth redeem the time, because the days are evil. The meaning may also be, that we might know to apply ourselves to the time, wherein there is great force. Howbeit Paul seemeth unto me to set that against intermission (ceasing or leaving off) which he commandeth of serving the time. Furthermore, because in many old copies κυριω is read, which word, although at the first sight it seemeth strange, I dare not altogether reject, if so be that reading be accepted, I doubt not but the mind of Paul is to refer all those duties [which] are done to our brethren, and whatsoever serveth to the maintenance of charity to the

[1] "Nostra injuria," by our injustice.

Digitized by Google

worship of God, that he might make the faithful more willing.

12. *Rejoicing in hope.* These three are both joined together amongst themselves, and also, in a manner, they seem to appertain unto that *serving the time;* for he doth best apply himself unto the time, and useth the occasion to run on courageously, who putteth his joy in the hope of the life to come, and beareth tribulations patiently. Howsoever it be, (for it is no great matter whether you join them together or separate them,) first, he forbiddeth us to set our hearts upon the present good things, and in earth and earthly things to seek our joy, as though our felicity were there; but he biddeth us erect our minds to heaven, where we may enjoy perfect and full joy. If our rejoicing shall be contained in the hope of the life to come, thereupon shall patience grow in adversity, because no abiding or suffering[1] of sorrow can oppress that joy; therefore, these two depend one of [on] another, joy conceived of hope, and patience in adversity. For no man will cheerfully, and with a quiet mind, submit himself to bear the cross, but he who hath learned to seek for his felicity out of the world, that with the consolation of hope he may mitigate and qualify the bitterness of the cross; but because both these are far above our strength, we must be earnest in prayer, and beseech God continually, that he suffer not our hearts to faint, fall to the ground, or to be broken with adversity. Finally, Paul doth not only provoke us to prayers, but plainly requireth perseverance of us, because we have a continual warfare, and daily new conflicts arise, to the bearing whereof, yea, even the strongest are unmeet, unless they now and then gather new strength. Howbeit that we faint not, the best remedy is the continuance of[2] prayer.

Joy conceived of the life to come and patience coupled together.

13. *Serving the necessities of the saints, &c.* He returneth unto the duties of charity, the chiefest whereof is to do good unto those of whom we look for no recompence. Because,

[1] "Nullus sensus," no sense or feeling. [2] "Assiduitas," diligence in.

Digitized by Google

therefore, it almost cometh to pass that they chiefly are despised who, above others, are oppressed with poverty, and stand in need of help, (for that is thought to be lost which is bestowed upon them,) God, in a special manner, commendeth them unto us. For then we are truly charitable in deed, when we help our poor brethren, for no other cause than to exercise our bountifulness. Now, hospitality is not the last kind of charity; that is, benevolence and liberality which is showed toward strangers, because they chiefly are destitute of all things, and are far from their friends.[1] We see, then, that every one ought by so much the more to be cared for of us, as they are commonly more neglected of men. Note, also, the propriety of speech, in that he saith we must communicate to the necessities of the saints, whereby he insinuateth that we ought so to relieve the want of our brethren, as though we succoured ourselves.

The faithful are specially to be succoured.

And he commandeth specially to help the saints; for although our charity ought to extend itself unto all men, yet it ought with singular affection to embrace those [who] are of the household of faith, who are joined unto us in a nearer manner.

14. *Bless them which persecute you: bless, (I say,) and curse not.*
15. *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*
16. *Be of like affection one towards another; not thinking arrogantly of yourselves, but applying yourselves to base things. Be not wise in your own opinions.*

14. *Bless them, &c.* Once I would have the reader admonished of this, that in every precept he do not curiously seek for a precise order; but to be content here to have scattered precepts whereby he may be prepared unto all the parts of a holy life; and those also drawn out of that principle which the apostle put down in the beginning of the chapter.

[1] "Ideo hanc nominatum nobis commendat," this, therefore, he expressly recommends to us, omitted.

Digitized by Google

Straightway he will give charge of not requiting injuries done. Here now he requireth somewhat that is more hard, namely, that we wish no harm to our enemies; but howsoever they vex us, and deal uncourteously with us, to wish unto them all prosperity, and to pray unto God for the same. Which meekness, as it is more difficult, so it is more seriously to be laboured for; for the Lord commandeth nothing wherein he requireth not our obedience. Neither is any excuse to be admitted, if we be void of that sense whereby the Lord would have us to differ from the wicked, and children of this world. Indeed, I confess it is a hard thing, and altogether contrary to the nature of man; howbeit nothing is so hard but it is overcome by the power of God, which shall never be wanting to us, if we be not negligent to call for it.

And although thou canst scarcely find one which hath profited so much in the law of God, that he can fulfil this precept, yet none can boast himself to be the son of God, or glory in the name of a Christian, who hath not partly put on this mind, and daily fighteth with the contrary affection.

I said this was harder than to remit vengeance when any is hurt; for some, although they withhold their hands, and are not themselves carried with the fury of hurting, yet they could wish that destruction or damage might otherwise happen to their enemies; yea, and if they be so calm that they wish no harm, yet scarcely one in an hundredth will wish him to be safe of whom he hath received injury; yea, a good part burst forth into cursings. But God, by his Word, doth not only bridle our hands from evil works, but also tameth the bitter affections of our heart. And not that only, but also would have us careful for the health of those who, by hurting us wrongfully, bring destruction upon themselves.

Our patience must appear not only in not wishing evil, but also in wishing good to our enemies.

Erasmus was deceived in the word *συλογειν*, because he observed not that it was opposed against cursings and maledictions; for Paul, in both of them, would have God to be a witness of our patience, how not only we bridle the fury of our wrath in our wishes, but also by praying for their re-

Digitized by Google

mission, we testify that we are sorry for them, whilst they perish wilfully.

15. *Rejoice with them* [that] *rejoice, &c.* In the third place, he putteth a general sentence, that the faithful embracing one another with a mutual affection, do account the estate one of another common unto them. And he reciteth the parts, or the kinds, in the first place, *that they should rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.* For so the nature of true love requireth, that every one had rather mourn with his brother, than, through pleasure or idleness, to behold his sorrow afar off. The substance then is, that we apply ourselves one to another as much as may be, and what condition soever come, that every one take upon him the feeling of another man's estate, whether to sorrow with him in adversity, or to rejoice with him in prosperity. And truly not to be glad at the felicity of one's brother is envy; and not to sorrow at his adversity is inhumanity. Let, then, that likeliness, or mutual combination of affection,[1] be amongst us, which may together conform us unto all affections.

16. *Not being high-minded.* In Greek, the apostle speaketh both more significantly and more fitly for the antithesis. Not cogitating (quoth he) high things; whereby he understandeth that it is not the part of a Christian man ambitiously to aspire unto those things whereby he may excel others, neither to have proud spirits; but rather to meditate modesty and meekness. For herein we excel before the Lord, and not in pride or contempt of our brethren—a precept very aptly added unto those [which] went before; for there is nothing more divideth that unity [which] was spoken of, than whilst we advance ourselves, and, to the end we may come to some higher place, look somewhat aloft.

This word, to them of the *lower sort*, I take in the neuter gender, that the antithesis may be complete. Here, there-

[1] "Sympathia," sympathy.

Digitized by Google

fore, all ambition is condemned, and elation of mind, which insinuateth itself under the name of magnanimity. Seeing moderation, or rather submission, is the chiefest virtue of Christians, which had rather always give honour unto others, than steal it from them, hereunto is that like which followeth; for there is nothing more inflameth the minds of men than the opinion of their own wisdom. His mind, therefore, is, that that being laid apart, we would also hear others, and obey their counsels. For whereas Erasmus turneth φρονιμους, *arrogant*, that is, coacted[1] and cold; because Paul should repeat the same thing twice, without any vehemence. Howbeit this is the best remedy to cure arrogancy, that men be not too wise in their own opinion.

A notable salve against arrogancy.

17. *Rendering to no man evil for evil; providing good things before all men.*
18. *If it may be, as much as in you lieth, have peace with all men.*
19. *Not revenging yourselves, beloved, but give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

17. *Rendering to no man.* It differeth in a manner nothing from that which followeth straightway, save that vengeance is somewhat more than this kind of recompence of that which he speaketh here; for sometimes we recompense evil for evil, yea, where we exact not the requiting of an injury, as if we give them hard entertainment who do us no good; for we are wont to estimate every man's merits towards us, or else how they may deserve at our hands, that we might bestow our duties upon them to whom we are already bound, or of whom we look for some thing. And, again, if any have denied us their help when we were in need, recompensing (as they say) like for like, we help them no more than we were helped of them when we were in need. There be other such like examples, wherein evil is recompensed for evil without manifest revengement.

Providing good things. I dislike not the translation of

[1] "Coactum," forced.

Digitized by Google

Erasmus, namely, *therefore*[1] *preparing*. Yet I choose rather to translate it word for word. Because every man is too much given to his own profit, or too provident in eschewing his own damages, Paul seemeth to require another care and attention. The meaning is, we must diligently do our endeavour, that by our probity and honesty all men may be edified. For as the innocency of conscience is necessary for ourselves before God; so the integrity of report is not to be neglected before men. For, if God ought to be glorified by our good works, so much is wanting to his glory, as men see nothing praiseworthy in us. Yea, the glory of God is not only obscured, but he is also dishonoured. For whatsoever we offend, the unlearned draw it to the reproach of the gospel. Howbeit, when we are commanded to provide good things before men, we must also note to what end. For the end is not that men might have us in admiration, and praise us; for Christ doth seriously drive away this desire from us, when he biddeth us, that all men being excluded, we should take God for the only witness of our good deeds; but that our minds being lift up unto God, they might give the praise to him, that by our example others might be stirred unto the study of righteousness; and, finally, that they might receive a good and sweet savour of our life, whereby they might be allured unto the love of God. And if so be that we be evil spoken of for the name of Christ, yet we give not over to provide good things before men; but then is that fulfilled, that we are counted as liars, and yet we are true, &c. 2 Cor. vi. 8.

18. *If it be possible, as much as in you lieth.* Tranquillity, and a manner of life so composed, that it may make us be beloved of all men, is no common gift of a Christian man. Hereunto, if we will give our endeavour, we must be endued not only with great equity, but also with great commodity and facility of manners;[2] which may not only conciliate or get unto us those [that] be upright and good, but also may turn the hearts of the wicked.

[1] "Provide," providently. [2] "Commoditate ac facilitate morum," of an obliging and affable disposition.

Digitized by Google

A watchword for all those [who] seek to be gracious unto men.

Howbeit here is a twofold caution (or head) to be taken, that we covet not in such sort to be gracious, that we refuse (so often as necessity shall require) to take upon us the hatred of any for Christ's sake. And surely we may see many, who, whilst for the pleasantness (or sweetness) of manners and (tranquillity or) quietness of mind they are amiable unto all, yet, for the gospel's sake, they have their nearest friends their greatest enemies. The second caution is, that our facility degenerate not into (assentation or) flattery, that for quietness' sake we would flatter the sins of men. Because, therefore, it cannot always be obtained, that we should have peace with all men, he hath added two particles, by the way of exception, *if it may be*, and *as much as in us lieth*.

Wherefore and when peace may be broken.

Finally, this must be estimated by the office of piety and charity, that we do not break peace, but being constrained through one of these. For we must so for quietness' sake tolerate and suffer many things, pardon offences, favourably remit the severe rigour of the law, that yet we be prepared (as often as need shall require) to fight courageously. For it cannot be that the soldiers of Christ should have a perpetual peace with the world, whose prince is Satan.

19. *Not revenging yourselves, beloved.* That evil which he correcteth here is more grievous than the former, whereof he made mention of late, as we have admonished, howbeit both of them arise out of the same fountain; namely, too much love of ourselves and natural pride, which maketh us very favourable to our own vices, but most severe towards others. Because, therefore, that disease doth beget almost in all men a furious desire of revenging when they are touched but a little, here he commandeth, how grievously soever we be hurt, that we ourselves go not about to revenge ourselves, but commit it to the Lord.

And because they are not easily bridled, who once have been taken with this unbridled affection, by a sweet speech he doth (as it were) lay hands upon us that he might restrain us, whilst he calleth us *beloved*. This, then, is the precept, That we neither revenge, nor seek to revenge, the

Digitized by Google

injuries done. The reason is added, because we must *give place to wrath.* And to *give place unto wrath* is to yield unto the Lord the power of judging, which they take from him that take upon them revengement. Wherefore, if it be a great sin to usurp the turn or course[1] of God, then is it not lawful to revenge; for so we prevent the judgment of God, who will have this reserved to himself. And withal he insinuateth that they who patiently expect his help shall have God their revenger; but they who prevent him leave no place for the help of God. Moreover, he doth not only here forbid that we execute revengement ourselves with our own hands, but also that our heart should be tempted with any such desire. It is, therefore, superfluous to distinguish between public and private revengement; for he is no more excusable who, with an evil mind, and desirous of revengement, seeketh the help of the magistrate, than he who deviseth what way he may revenge by himself. Yea, revengement is not always to be desired of God, as we shall see straightway; because, if our prayers proceed from a private affection, and not from the pure zeal of the Spirit, we do not so much procure the Lord to be our Judge, as we make him the minister (or executioner) of our wicked concupiscence. Therefore, we do not otherwise give place unto wrath, than when, with quiet minds, we expect a fit time of deliverance; in the meanwhile wishing that they who are now our adversaries, by repenting may become our friends.

For it is written. He bringeth a proof taken out of the song of Moses, where the Lord denounceth himself to be the revenger of his enemies. And those are the enemies of God who vex his servants without cause. "He that toucheth you, (quoth the Lord,) toucheth the apple of mine eye." Let us, therefore, be content with this consolation, that neither they shall escape unpunished, who trouble us without a cause; neither shall we, by suffering, make ourselves more subject, or more open for the injuries of the wicked; but rather we shall give place unto the Lord, (who is our only revenger and deliverer,) that he may help us. Although it is not

Deut. xxxii. 35.

[1] "Vices," the office.

Digitized by Google

lawful, yea, even to desire vengeance of God for our enemies; but rather we are to pray that they may be converted and become friends; and if so that they proceed in their wickedness, that shall happen unto them which happeneth unto other contemners of God. For Paul doth not, therefore, cite this testimony, as though we might straightway be on fire so soon as we are injured, and even as the affections or heat of the flesh shall require, to desire of God that he would be the revenger of our injuries. But, first, he teacheth that it is not our parts to revenge, unless we will take unto ourselves the office of God; secondly, he noteth that we are not to fear lest the wicked should rage more furiously, if they see we bear patiently; for it is not in vain that God doth take unto himself the office of revenging.

20. *Therefore, if thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.*
21. *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

20. *Therefore, if thy.* Now he declareth how we may truly fulfil those precepts of not revenging and recompensing evil, namely, if we do not only abstain from doing injury, but also do good unto those [that] do hurt us. For that is a certain kind of indirect retaliation (or requiting,) when we turn our beneficence away from those [who] have hurt us. Under the name of meat and drink, understand thou all kind of duties. According, therefore, to thy ability, whatsoever thy enemy standeth in need of, whether riches, counsel, or labour, thou oughtest to help him.

Furthermore, he calleth him our enemy, not whom we hate, but who hateth us. And if so be they are to be helped according to the flesh, much less is their health or salvation to be hindered by contrary imprecations.

What profit cometh of doing good to those that hate us.

Thou shalt heap coals of fire. Because we are not willing to lose both charges and labour, he showeth what fruit shall come if we do courteously entertain our enemies. By *coals* some understand destruction, which is returned upon the head of the enemy, if we do good to him [that] is unwor-

Digitized by Google

thy, and behave ourselves towards him otherwise than he is worthy;[1] for so his fault is doubled. Others had rather understand it that his mind is allured to love us again, when he perceiveth how courteously he is entertained. I take it more simply, that his mind shall be inclined to one[2] part. For surely either thy enemy shall be mollified by thy benefits, or if he be so barbarous that he will be nothing meeked,[3] yet shall he burn and boil with the testimony of his conscience, which shall feel itself overwhelmed with your bountifulness.

21. *Be not overcome of evil, &c.* This sentence seemeth to be put instead of a confirmation; for here altogether we have to fight with perversity, which, if we go about to requite, we must confess we are overcome of it; on the contrary, if we recompense good for evil, by that deed we show the invincible constancy of our mind. And surely this is a notable kind of victory, whose fruit is not only conceived in mind, but also felt in deed; the Lord giving such success unto their patience as that they could not wish better. On the contrary, he which shall go about to overcome evil with evil, may chance overmatch his enemy in maliciousness, but to his own destruction; for, in so doing, he fighteth for the devil.[4]

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; for the powers which be are ordained of God.*
2. *Therefore, he which resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they which shall resist shall get unto themselves judgment.*

[1] "Promeritus est," he has deserved. [2] "In alterutram partem," to one part or other. [3] "Ut nihil mansuefaciat," that nothing will soften him. [4] "Diabolo militat," he is the devil's soldier.

Digitized by Google

1. *Let every soul, &c.* That he doth so diligently handle this place, yea, and that whilst he dealeth with the institution or fashioning of a Christian life, thereby appeareth he was constrained thereunto by some great necessity, which seeing the preaching of the gospel doth always bring with it, at that time chiefly it was like to bring it. For thereby always tumultuous spirits, who think the kingdom of Christ cannot be sufficiently advanced, unless all earthly powers (or authorities) be suppressed; neither that they can enjoy the liberty given by him, except they shake off every yoke of human subjection. Howbeit this error did possess the Jews above others, who thought it unmeet that the progeny of Abraham, whose kingdom flourished before the coming of the Saviour, should now, after his manifestation, abide in servitude. And there was also another thing, which did no less alienate the Jews than the Gentiles from their princes; namely, because they did not only all of them abhor from [dislike] piety, but also with most infestuous or deadly minds did persecute religion. Therefore, it seemed an absurd thing to acknowledge them for lawful lords and princes who went about to take the kingdom from Christ, the only Lord of heaven and earth. For these causes it is like [that] Paul was moved, that with greater care he might confirm the authority of magistrates; and, first of all, he putteth down a general precept, wherein summarily he comprehended that [which] he is about to speak of; then, afterwards, he addeth those things which make unto the exposition and confirmation of the precept. He calleth them *high powers*, not *the highest powers*, as though they obtained the highest empire or rule, but which excel above other men. In respect, therefore, of subjects, and not in respect of themselves, one being compared with another, magistrates are so called. And, verily, by this word the apostle seemeth unto me to go about to take away the curiosity[1] of men, who are often wont to inquire by what right they which are in authority came by their power; but to us it ought to suffice that they do rule; for they have not ascended unto this

Causes moving Paul to intreat of obedience to magistrates.

[1] "Frivolam curiositatem," frivolous curiosity.

Digitized by Google

estate by their own strength, but they are placed by the hand of God. And whereas he nameth *every soul*, thereby he taketh away all exception, lest any should pretend an immunity or freedom from the common subjection.

For there is no power but of God. A reason why we should be subject unto magistrates, because they are ordained by the ordinance of God. A reason why we should be subject to magistrates.

For if it be the Lord's pleasure so to govern the world, he goeth about to invert the ordinances of God, and so resisteth God himself, whoso despiseth or rejecteth the authority or higher power, seeing to contemn his Providence who is the author of civil government is to fight against him. Furthermore, understand that authorities or powers are of God, not as the pestilence, hunger, war, and such like punishments of sin, are said to be of him; but because he hath appointed them for the lawful and right administration of the world. For albeit tyrannies, and unjust dominations, inasmuch as they are full of deformity, are not of the ordinary government; yet, nevertheless, the right of government is ordained of God for the health of mankind. How the higher powers are of God.

Therefore, seeing it is lawful both to repel wars, and also to seek remedies against other evils, the apostle commandeth the authority and government of magistrates to be willingly and cheerfully received and reverenced of us, as profitable unto mankind. For we cannot properly call those punishments which God layeth upon men for their sins, ordinances, but those means which he hath purposely set down for the conservation of a lawful order.

2. *And they which shall resist.* Because none can resist God but to their own destruction, he threateneth that they shall not escape unpunished whoso oppose themselves in this respect against the providence of God; therefore, we are to take heed lest we fall under this sentence. By *judgment* I understand not only that punishment which is executed by the magistrate, as though he would have said, They are justly punished that rebel against authority; but also every vengeance of God, what way soever it come: for he teacheth generally what end abideth for those [who] fight against God.

Digitized by Google

3. *For princes are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Wilt thou, then, not fear the power? do good, and thou shalt have praise for it:*

4. *For he is the minister of God to thy wealth. But if thou hast done any evil, fear; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, to take vengeance on those which do evil.*

3. *For princes.* Now, also, he commendeth unto us the obedience of princes by that profit [which] cometh of them. Therefore, this particle causal γαρ, that is, *for*, is to be referred unto the first proposition, and not unto the last sentence. Finally, this is the commodity, namely, that God, by that means, will provide for the tranquillity of good men, and for the bridling of the waywardness of evil men; in which two things the safety of mankind is contained. For unless the fury of godless persons be met withal, and innocent men be defended from their lust, all things shall forthwith come to nought. If this, then, be the only medicine whereby mankind is delivered from destruction, it ought to be diligently conserved of us, unless we will profess ourselves to be the public enemies of mankind. And whereas he addeth,

The commodity for which God hath ordained magistrates.

Wilt thou not fear? do good, thereby he insinuateth there is no cause why we should be afraid of the magistrate if that we be good; yea, that this is a secret testimony of an evil conscience, and one devising some mischief, if any go about to shake off or put from him that yoke. Howbeit here he speaketh of the true and, as it were, the natural duty of the magistrate; from the which, although they oftentimes which bear rule do degenerate, yet that obedience is to be given them which is due unto princes; for if an evil prince be the scourge of the Lord to punish the sins of the people, let us remember it cometh to pass through our fault that the excellent blessing of God is made a curse unto us.

The duty of the magistrate.

Therefore let us not cease to reverence the good ordinance of God; which thing we shall easily do if we impute unto ourselves whatsoever evil is in it. He therefore showeth

Digitized by Google

here to what end magistrates are ordained of the Lord; whose effect should always be extant, if, through our fault, so noble and healthful an institution were not corrupted. For seeing princes do never so abuse their power in vexing the good and innocent, but in their tyranny they retain some show of a just domination, there can be no tyranny which in some respect is not a defence to conserve the society of men. Here, also, he hath noted two parts, of the which, yea, even the philosophers themselves have thought the best composed administration of a commonwealth to consist; namely, the rewarding of good men, and the punishing of evil. The word *praise* hath here a large signification, after the manner of the Hebrews.

4. *For he is the minister of God to thy wealth.* Here even the magistrates themselves may learn what is their calling. For they rule not for their own cause, but for the common profit; neither are they endued with an infinite or unlimited power, but such as is tied to the health of their subjects.[1] Finally, they are bound unto God and men in their principality.[2] For because they are the substitutes of God, and do his business, they shall give account unto him.

Secondly, that ministry which God hath committed to them respecteth the subjects; wherefore they are also debtors unto them. And private men are admonished that this is of the bountifulness of God, to defend them from the injuries of wicked persons by the sword of princes.

For they bear not the sword in vain. The other part of the office of magistrates is, that they ought to repress the lasciviousness of wicked men, which willingly do not suffer themselves to be governed by laws; and to take such punishment as the judgment of God requireth for their wickedness. For he doth plainly denounce[3] them armed with the sword, not for a vain show only, but that they might smite evil-doers.

Moreover, this saying, *the revenger of wrath*, is as much as

[1] "Sed quæ subditorum saluti sit obstricta," but such as is bound to provide for the safety of their subjects. [2] "In suo principatu," in the exercise of their supremacy. [3] "Pronunciat," declare.

Digitized by Google

if it were said, the executor of the wrath of God. And that he proveth by the use of the sword, which the Lord hath given into their hands. A notable place to prove the authority of the magistrate.[1] For if God, in arming the magistrate, hath also commanded him to use the sword so often as he punisheth the guilty with death, by exercising the vengeance of God he obeyeth his commandments. Therefore they contend with God who think it an abomination that the blood of wicked men should be shed.

5. *Wherefore we must needs be subject, not only for fear of punishment, but also for conscience.*
6. *And for this cause pay ye tribute: for they are the ministers of God, serving for the same purpose.*
7. *Give to every man therefore his duty: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour belongeth.*

5. *Wherefore we must needs be subject.* Now, by the way of collection, yet with a kind of polishing, he repeateth that which he commanded in the beginning, touching the obedience [that] is to be given to magistrates; namely, how they are to be obeyed, not only for the cause of man's necessity, but also that we may obey God; for he hath put this word *wrath* for *vengeance*, or *revengement*, which the magistrate may take for the contempt of his dignity or calling; as though he had said, we must not therefore obey because we cannot freely resist the mighty and those [who] are armed, as injuries are wont to be borne which cannot be repelled; but voluntarily we are to take upon us that subjection whereunto our conscience is bound by the word of God. Therefore, albeit the magistrate were unarmed, and a man might provoke and contemn him (freely, to wit) without punishment for it, yet is it no more to be attempted, than if we saw present vengeance to be at hand for it. For it is not the part of a private man to take the regiment from him whom the Lord hath placed with authority over us. This whole disputation is of civil government; therefore, in

The duties of subjects towards magistrates.

[1] "'Jus gladii," the right of the sword.

Digitized by Google

vain go they about by this place to establish their abominable tyranny, which exercise authority over men's consciences.

6. *And for this cause pay we tribute.* By occasion he maketh mention of tribute, the reason whereof is taken from the office of magistrates; for if it be their part to defend and conserve in safety the tranquillity of good men, and to oppose themselves against the godless practices of the wicked, that they cannot do unless they be holpen by power and firm helps.

Tributes, therefore, are well and worthily paid for the maintenance of so necessary charges. Concerning the manner of customs and tributes, this is no place for any large discourse; neither is it our part to prescribe [to] princes, how much they should bestow[1] on every thing, or call them to a reckoning; yet is it meet they should remember whatsoever they have of the people it is, as it were, common goods, not an instrument of private lust and riot. For we see to what use Paul appointeth those tributes [which] are paid; namely, that princes might be furnished with strength to defend their subjects.

7. *Give to every man therefore his duty,* [due.] The apostle seemeth to me here to go about to comprise summarily in what things the duties of subjects towards magistrates consist; namely, that they have them in estimation and honour; that they obey their statutes, laws, and judgments; that they pay tributes and customs. Under the name of *fear* he noteth obedience; by *customs* and *tributes* he meaneth not only freight paid for carriage and taxes, but also other revenues. And this place confirmeth that [which] I said before, we must obey kings, and every other superior, not because we are constrained, but because it is an acceptable obedience to God; for he will not only be feared, but also be honoured with a voluntary obedience.

8. *Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

[1] "Impendant," expend.

Digitized by Google

9. *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not lust; and if there be any other commandment, it is in few words comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

10. *Charity worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore, the fulfilling of the law is charity.*

8. *Owe nothing to any man.* There are some which think this is not spoken without a taunt;[1] as though Paul answered to their objection, who contend that Christians are overcharged, as who should say other precepts than the precepts of charity were enjoined them. And surely I deny not but it may be taken *ironicè*, to wit, tauntingly, that he might grant unto those [that] admit no other law than of charity their request; but in another sense; yet had I rather take it simply, because I think Paul's meaning is to refer this precept of the authority of magistrates (lest it should be thought of any to be but weak) unto the law of charity; as though he had said, When I require you to obey, I require nothing else but that which all Christians ought to perform by the law of charity; for if you would have the godly to be safe, (which thing not to will were cruel,) you must study that laws and judgments may be of strength, and the governors of the laws, by whose benefit peace redoundeth to all, may have an obedient people. Therefore, he violateth charity, if any bring in ἀναρχία, (liberty,) such as when there is no magistrate every man doth his pleasure, after which doth straightway follow a perturbation of all things.

For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. The counsel of Paul is to revoke[2] all the commandments of the law unto love, that we may know how we then rightly obey the commandments when we keep charity; and then that we refuse no labour which may make to the keeping of charity. So he confirmeth very well that [which] he commanded touching the obedience [which] is to be given to magistrates, wherein the greatest part of charity doth consist. But here many are troubled, and cannot well unfold themselves out

[1] "Ironia," irony. [2] "Revocare," to reduce.

Digitized by Google

of this difficulty, namely, that Paul saith the law is fulfilled if we love our neighbour; for so there is no mention of the worship of God, which ought not to be omitted. But Paul hath not respect unto the whole law; he speaketh here only of those duties which are commanded us of the law towards our neighbour. And surely that is true, the whole law is fulfilled when we love our neighbours; because true love towards men proceedeth not but from the love of God, and is a testimony as well as an effect thereof. Yet Paul here maketh mention only of the Second Table, for the question was only of that; as though he had said, He hath done his duty towards all the world which loveth his neighbour as himself. That cavil of sophisters is childish, which go about to draw justification of works out of this sentence; for Paul saith not what men do or do not, but he speaketh under a condition, which thou shalt nowhere find to be fulfilled. And when we say men are not justified by works, we deny not but the keeping of the law is true righteousness; but because no man doth nor hath performed it, we say all men are excluded from it; and, therefore, the only refuge is in the grace of Christ.

9. *For that, Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Hence it cannot be gathered what commandments are in the Second Table, seeing in the end also he addeth, *and if there be any other commandment.* For he omitted the commandment of honouring parents. And it may seem very absurd, that that should be omitted, which chiefly appertained to the purpose. But what if, therefore, he did omit it, lest he should obscure his argument? but as I dare not affirm that, so I see nothing wanting here that might serve to his purpose, namely, seeing God would nothing else by all his commandments than that he might instruct us unto charity, and how by all means we are to strive thereunto. And yet the quiet[1] reader will easily confess that Paul would prove by comparisons how the whole law tendeth to this, that mutual charity might be maintained amongst us; and this is to be understood which

[1] "Non contentiosus," not contentious.

Digitized by Google

he omitted, that obedience towards magistrates is not the last of nourishing peace, and conserving brotherly love.

10. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour.* He showeth by the effect that under charity are contained all things which are delivered in all those precepts; for he that is indued with true charity will never study to hurt his brother. What else doth the whole law forbid than that we should do no injury to our neighbour? Furthermore, this must be applied unto the present purpose; for seeing magistrates are the governors of peace and equity, whoso coveteth that every man may have his own, and would have all men live in safety, he must defend, as much as lieth in him, the estates of magistrates. The enemies of government give liberty of hurting; whereas he repeateth again that love is the fulfilling of the law, understand it (as before) of that part of the law which respecteth the society of men; for the First Table of the law, which is concerning the worship of God, is not touched here.

11. *And this also, seeing we know the season, because it is time that we should now awake out of sleep: (for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.)*
12. *The night is past, the day is come nigh; let us therefore cast away the deeds of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*
13. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, neither in chambering and wantonness, neither in strife and envying.*
14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

11. *And this also.* Now he taketh in hand another place of exhortation; namely, because the beams of eternal life have begun to shine unto us, as it were, in the morning, we must do that which they are wont to do that walk in the midst of the light, and in the sight of men. For they take diligent heed lest they commit any filthy and unseemly thing; because, if they fall, they see they are subject to too many witnesses; but we, which always stand in the sight of

Digitized by Google

God and angels, and whom Christ, the true Sun of Righteousness, inviteth to his sight, ought much rather take heed of all uncleanness. The meaning, therefore, of the words is this: Seeing we know it is fit time that we should awake out of sleep, let us cast off whatsoever is of the night; let us shake off all the works of darkness, seeing the darkness itself is now driven away; and, studying the works of light, let us walk as it is meet in the daytime. The words [which] are interposed must be included in a parenthesis. Moreover, because here is an allegory, it is necessary to note what every part doth signify. By *night* we understand ignorance of God, wherein whoso are holden they err and sleep, as it were, in the night. For the faithless labour of [in] these two evils, because they are blind and sottish, or dull. And this sottishness, or mazidness, he setteth forth a little after by *sleep*, which is (as he saith) the image of death. By *light* he understandeth the revelation of the truth of God, by the which the Sun of Righteousness, Christ, appeareth to us. He useth this speech, *to awake*, for to be armed and prepared to do those things which the Lord requireth of us. *Works of darkness* are put for filthy and wicked works; because, as he saith, the night is without shame. *The armour of light*, for honest, sober, and chaste works, such as the day is wont to serve unto. And he useth rather this word *armour* than works, because we must fight for the Lord.

What is meant by night and by light.

But this parcel in the beginning of the verse, namely, *and this also*, is to be read by itself. For it dependeth upon the former doctrine; as in Latin we say, *adhæc vel prætereà*, *moreover*, or *furthermore*. He saith, the time or season is known to the faithful, because the day of God's calling and visitation requireth new life and new manners, as for exposition's sake, he addeth afterward, it is time to arise. For it is not χρονος, but καιρος, by which word is noted the occasion, or fit time.

For now is our salvation nearer. This place is diversely wrested of the interpreters. Many refer the word *believed* unto the time of the law, as though Paul said, the Jews be-

Digitized by Google

lieved before Christ came; which interpretation I refuse as hard and contracted; and surely to restrain a general doctrine to some small part of the church were absurd. In all that congregation whereunto he wrote, what one Jew was there? Then this speech should not agree unto the Romans. Moreover, the comparison of night and day (in my judgment) taketh away this doubt. This, therefore, seemeth unto me to be the simple meaning, Now is our salvation nearer than when we began to believe; that it might be referred unto the time which went before faith. For, seeing this adverb hath an indifferent signification,[1] this proposition of the apostle seemeth much more convenient; as appeareth by that which followeth.

12. *The night is past, the day approacheth near.* This is the occasion he made mention of a little before. For albeit the faithful as yet are not received into the full light, yet very well he compareth the knowledge of the life to come, which shineth unto us by the gospel, unto the morning. *Day* here, as in many other places, is not put for the light of faith, (otherwise he would not say it draweth near, but it is present, yea, now it shineth, as in the midst of his course,) but for that brightness of the celestial life, whose beginnings are now seen in the gospel. The sum is, As by the spring of the day we gather that the full light of the sun is at hand, even so soon as God beginneth to call us, we gather that we ought to intend upon[2] the coming of Christ. He saith *the night is past*, because we are not so overwhelmed with a thick mist as the faithless are, in whom there appeareth no sparkle of life; but the hope of resurrection is set before our eyes by the gospel. Yea, the light of faith, whereby we know the brightness of the celestial glory is at hand, ought to stir us up that we freeze not here upon this earth. But a little after, where he biddeth us walk as upon the daylight, he keepeth not the same metaphor; because he compareth the present state, wherein Christ shineth unto us, to

[1] "Mediam significationem," intermediate signification. [2] "Intentos esse," be intent upon.

Digitized by Google

the day. But by divers ways he goeth about to exhort sometimes unto the meditation of the life to come, sometimes unto the reverence of the light of God.

13. *Not in rioting and drunkenness.* He hath put down here three sorts of vices, of the which he hath noted every one by two names, to wit, intemperance, and excess in living or in diet; carnal lust, and that uncleanness [which] is joined to it; envy and strife. If these vices have such filthiness in them, that even carnal men are ashamed to commit them in the sight of men, it is meet we should always abstain from them which walk in the sight of God; yea, then when we are sequestered from the sight of men. In the third part, although contention goeth before emulation, yet there is no doubt but the mind of Paul is to admonish, that contentions and strifes proceed forth of this fountain, or whilst every one seeketh to excel, and envieth another; and ambition is the cause of both evils.

14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.* This metaphor is very usual in the Scripture, in those things which make either to the adorning or deforming of man; both which is seen in apparel. For a filthy and torn garment dishonoureth a man, a handsome and clean garment doth greatly beautify him. To *put on Christ*, here signifieth to be every way defended by virtue of his Spirit, whereby we are made apt unto all the parts of sanctity (or holiness;) for so the image of God is restored in us, which is the only ornament of the soul. For Paul hath respect unto the end of our calling; because God, adopting us, doth graff us into the body of his only begotten Son, and, verily, upon this condition, that we, putting from us our former life, may become new men in him. Wherefore in another place, also, he saith the faithful put on Christ in baptism. Gal. iii. 27.

Make no provision for the flesh. So long as we carry our flesh about we cannot altogether cast away the care thereof; for our conversation is so in heaven that we may sojourn in earth. Therefore, the things appertaining to the body are to be cared for, yet no otherwise than helps for our

How we should use the things of this world.

Digitized by Google

peregrination,[1] not that we should forget our country. Yea, profane men have said, A few things suffice nature; yet the appetites of men are insatiable. He, therefore, which coveteth to fulfil the lusts of his flesh, must needs not only exceed, but be drowned into a huge and deep gulf. Paul, labouring to restrain the concupiscences of men, admonisheth that this is the cause of all intemperance, when no man is content with the sober and lawful use of things; therefore hath he prescribed this order, that we may serve the necessity of our flesh, and not pamper the lust thereof. So shall it come to pass that we may use this world as not abusing it.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Him that is weak in faith receive, not unto doubtfulness of disputation.*
2. *He that believeth let him eat every meat: but he that is weak eateth herbs.*
3. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not condemn him which eateth: for the Lord hath received him.*
4. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? He standeth or falleth to his own Lord. Yea, he shall stand: for God is able to make him stand.*

1. *Him that is weak.* Now he passeth unto a precept very necessary for ecclesiastical instruction, that they which have profited more in the doctrine of Christ might apply[2] themselves to the ruder sort, and bestow their strength to support their weakness. For amongst the people of God there are some weaklings, who, unless they be handled with great courtesy and gentleness, they are discouraged, and at length revolt from religion. Which thing, even at that time chiefly,

[1] "Peregrinationis," pilgrimage. [2] "Accommodent," accommodate.

Digitized by Google

(as it is like,) did happen, seeing the churches were mixed of Jews and Gentiles, of whom some, having been long accustomed with the observations of the law of Moses, and nursed therein from their infancy, were not easily drawn from them, some others, seeing they had learned no such thing, did reject the yoke they were not acquainted withal. And because man is prone to fall, from diversity of opinions, unto brawlings and contentions, the apostle showeth how they which vary so in opinions might live quietly amongst themselves. And he prescribeth the best way, namely, that they which are strong bestow their labour to support the weak; and they which have profited more to bear with the ruder sort. For if God make us strong above others, he doth it not[1] that we should oppress the weak; neither is it the point of Christian wisdom to be insolent above measure, and to contemn others. In this sort, therefore, he directeth his talk towards those [that] are more skilful and already confirmed, who are by so much the more bound to help their neighbours, as they have received a larger gift of the Lord.

Not unto doubtfulness of disputation. The speech is defective, because the word [which] should make up the sense is wanting; yet it is sure the apostle would [mean] nothing else, than that the weaker sort should not be wearied with unmeet disputations. The proposition he now handleth is to be kept in memory; for because many of the Jews did cleave yet unto the shadows of the law, he confesseth it was fault-worthy in them; yet he requesteth it might be borne withal for a time, for to urge them more hardly were to hazard their faith. He calleth, then, those questions contentions, which either trouble or plunge with doubts[2] the mind not yet sufficiently established. Although it were meet to extend this further, namely, unto intricate and curious questions, whereby weak consciences, without edification, are disquieted and troubled. Therefore, we must regard what questions every one is fit to bear, and our doctrine must be tempered for the capacity of every one.

[1] "Neque . . . robur confert," he doth not bestow strength. [2] "Implicant dubitationibus," involve in doubt.

Digitized by Google

2. *He that believeth*, &c. Amongst divers readings what Erasmus hath followed I see not; for he hath made the sentence lame, which otherwise is perfect in the words of Paul; and hath improperly, for an article relative, put *alius quidem credit*, to wit, *one, verily, believeth*. Neither ought it to seem hard or wrested, that I take the infinitive for the imperative, because this kind of speech is very usual with Paul. He calleth those, therefore, believers who are indued with the assurance of conscience; to these he granteth the indifferent use of all things. In the meanwhile, he that is weak eateth herbs, and abstaineth from those things whose use he thinketh not lawful for him. If the common reading be better liked, the sense shall be, It is not right that he which freely eateth all meats, because he believeth he may do it, should examine those [that] are yet weak and tender in faith by the same rule. To translate them *sick* (as some have done) is ridiculous.

3. *He which eateth, let him not despise.* Wisely and fitly he meeteth with the faults on both sides. For they which are strong have this fault, that they despise, and also deride, as superstitious persons, those [who] are scrupulous in things of no great importance. On the contrary, these can scarcely stay themselves from rash judgment, that they should not condemn that which they embrace or conceive not. Whatsoever, therefore, they see to be done against their own opinion, they count that for evil; therefore he dissuadeth those from contempt, and these from too much frowardness. And the reason which he addeth, because it appertaineth unto both sorts of men, it is to be applied unto both members. When you see (saith he) a man lightened with knowledge,[1] thou hast testimony enough that he is received of the Lord; if thou dost, then, either contemn or condemn him, thou dost reject him whom the Lord hath received.

4. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?* &c. As thou shouldst deal uncivilly, yea, proudly amongst men

[1] "Cognitione Dei," with the knowledge of God.

Digitized by Google

if thou wouldst bring another man's servant under thy rules, and examine all his deeds by the line of thy will; so thou takest too much upon thee if thou condemn any thing in the servant of God, because it pleaseth not thee. For it is not thy part to prescribe him what he should do, or what he should not do; neither need he to live according to thy rule. And whereas he taketh from us the faculty of judging, it appertaineth as well unto the person as unto the deeds. Wherein yet there is great diversity; for the man, whatsoever he be, we ought to leave him to the judgment of God. As for his deeds, we may not determine of them according to our own estimation, but according to the Word of God. For that judgment which is taken from the Word of God is neither man's judgment, nor unfit. Paul, therefore, here would drive us from all temerous and rash judgment, whereinto they fall which dare judge of the deeds of men beside the Word of God.

How we should judge of the deeds of men.

He standeth or falleth to his own Lord. As though he said, The Lord properly hath this authority to reprove or accept that [which] the servant doth; therefore, he is injurious to the Lord, whoso goeth about to take this authority unto him. Whereas he addeth, *yea, he shall stand*, thereby he commandeth us not only to abstain from condemning, but also exhorteth unto courtesy and humanity, that we should alway hope well of him in whom we discern any portion of true godliness; seeing God hath put us in hope that he will fully confirm them, and bring them on to perfection in whom he hath begun the work of his grace. For in that he reasoneth from the power of God, he doth it not simply, as though he said, God can do it if he would; but he joineth the will of God with his power, as the manner of the Scripture is. And yet he defineth not here any perpetuity, as though he must needs stand unto the end whom God hath once erected; but only admonisheth that we should hope well, and that our judgments should lean this way; as he also teacheth in another place, saying, "He which hath begun in you a good work will perform it to the end." To be short, Paul showeth to what side the judgments of such men ought to sway in whom charity doth flourish (or abound.)

Philip. i. 6.

Digitized by Google

5. *This man verily esteemeth one day above another day: another man counteth all days alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.*

6. *He that regardeth the day, to the Lord he regardeth it; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he regardeth it not. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that abstaineth, abstaineth to the Lord, and giveth God thanks.*

5. *This man verily.* He spake a little before of religion in the choice of meats; now he bringeth in another example of the difference of days, both which proceeded from Judaism. For seeing that the Lord in his law had made a difference between meats, and pronounced some unclean, whose use he forbade; and seeing also he had ordained certain festival and solemn days, commanding the same to be observed, the Jews, who had been brought up in the doctrine of the law from their childhood, could not put away the reverence of days which they had learned from the beginning, and whereunto they had accustomed themselves all their life; neither durst they touch those meats which they abhorred so long. That they were indued with such opinions it was of infirmity; for they would have thought otherwise if they had attained unto the certain and clear knowledge of Christian liberty; but in that they restrained themselves from that which they thought to be unlawful for them, that was a token of godliness, even as it had been a sign of boldness and contempt if they had tasted any thing against their conscience. Here, therefore, the apostle teacheth a most excellent moderation, when he commandeth every man to be fully assured of his counsel; whereby he giveth to understand there ought to be in Christians such a study and care of true obedience, that they enterprise nothing which they think not, or rather are sure, doth please God. And it is altogether to be observed, that this is the beginning of a right life, if men depend upon the will of God, and suffer not themselves (through a doubtful and wavering mind) to move a fingerbreadth; because it cannot be avoided, but our rashness must needs straightway burst forth into con-

Nothing should be done with a doubting or wavering conscience.

Digitized by Google

tempt, when we dare step further than we are persuaded may be lawful for us. But if any man object, that error is always doubtful, and therefore such certainty as Paul requireth cannot be found in the weak; the answer is ready, namely, that such are to be pardoned, if they keep themselves within their compass. For the meaning of Paul is nothing else but to restrain the immoderate liberty, whereby very many at a venture thrust themselves into matters doubtful and unknown. So, then, Paul requireth this choice, that the will of God might go before all our actions. Objection. Answer.

6. *He that regardeth the day, &c.* Forasmuch as Paul knew certainly, that the observation of days proceedeth from the not knowing of Christ, it is not credible that he did wholly defend such a corruption; and yet the words seem to import that he sinneth not which observeth the day; for nothing can be acceptable unto God except it be good. Therefore, that thou mayest understand Paul's meaning, it is necessary to put a difference between that opinion which any hath conceived of observing days, and the observation itself, whereunto he bindeth himself. For the opinion is superstitious; neither doth Paul deny that, who, under the name of *infirmity*, hath already condemned it, and will by and by condemn it more plainly. But whereas he who is holden with that superstition dare not violate the solemnity of the day, that is approved of God, because he dare do nothing with a doubtful conscience. For what should the Jew do, who, as yet, hath not profited so much, that he should be delivered from the religious observation of days? He hath the Word of God, wherein the observation of days is commended unto him. A necessity is laid upon him by the law; the taking away of that necessity is not yet perfectly known unto him. There remaineth, therefore, nothing else, but that he, expecting a larger revelation, should keep himself within the compass of his capacity; and not to use the benefit of liberty before he have embraced the same by faith. The very same is to be understood of him that refraineth himself from unclean meats. For if, in the perplexity of mind, he should eat, that were not to re-

Digitized by Google

ceive a benefit at the hand of God, but rather a malapert thrusting of his hand into things forbidden. Let him, therefore, use other things which he supposeth are granted to him, and let him follow the measure of his own understanding. So shall he give thanks to the Lord, which he cannot do, except he be persuaded that he is fed by the benefit of God. Therefore he is not to be despised, as though by this, his sobriety and godly fearfulness, he offended the Lord. Neither shall any absurdity follow, if we say the modesty of a weak man is approved or allowed of the Lord, not of merit, but of grace or favour.[1]

Howbeit, because of late he required the certainty of mind, lest every one should rashly take upon him the keeping of this or that at his pleasure, we are to consider if he do not here rather exhort than affirm; because this way the text shall run better, namely, Let every man know the ground or reason of that [which] he doth; for he must give account at the tribunal seat of God: for whether a man eat meat or abstain, he ought in both to have respect unto God. And, certainly, there is nothing more apt, as well to restrain the liberty of judging, as to correct superstitions, than to cite us before the tribunal seat of God; and, therefore, Paul very wisely doth propose a Judge before every one, unto whose will they ought to refer (or examine) whatsoever they do. Neither doth the affirmative speech let this acception; because straightway after he addeth, that no man liveth or dieth to himself; where he reciteth not what men can do, but commandeth what they ought to do.

And note that he saith, we then eat and abstain to the Lord when we give thanks. Therefore, both the use of meats, and also abstinence, is impure without thanksgiving. It is only the name of God, which, whilst it is called upon, doth sanctify us and ours.

7. *For none of us liveth to himself, and none of us dieth to himself.*
8. *For whether we live, we live to the Lord; or whether we die,*

[1] "Per indulgentiam," through indulgence.

Digitized by Google

we die to the Lord: whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

9. *For, therefore, Christ both died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord of the quick and dead.*

7. *For none of us liveth, &c.* Now he confirmeth the former sentence, by a reason taken from the whole unto a part, namely, that it is no marvel though the particular actions of our life ought to respect the Lord, seeing our life itself is wholly to be bestowed to his glory. For then, verily, is the life of a Christian man framed aright, when he hath the will of God for his mark. And if that thou art bound to examine by his will whatsoever thou dost, then is it altogether sin to take anything in hand which thou thinkest may displease him, yea, which thou art not assured may please him.

The will of God ought to be the only rule of man's life.

8. *To live unto the Lord* doth not signify here, as in the sixth chapter, to be led by his Spirit; but to apply himself to his will and beck, and to dispose all those things he hath unto his glory. And we are not only to live unto the Lord, but also to die; that is, as well our death as life is to be resigned to his will. Hereunto he addeth a notable reason, because, whether we live or die, we are his; for thereupon it followeth, that he hath power over life and death. The use of this doctrine is very large; for so the lordship of life and death is ascribed unto God, that every man might the better bear his estate, as the yoke imposed by him; for it is meet he should assign to every one his standing and course. And so we are not only forbidden rashly to take in hand this or that without the commandment of God, but also we are commanded to be patient in all griefs and losses. If, therefore, at any time, the flesh start aside in adversity, let us remember that he who is not free, neither hath power over himself, doth pervert right and order, if he depend not upon the beck of his Lord. By this means, also, is delivered unto us a rule to live and die, so that if he prolong our life, by continual miseries and sorrows, yet we covet not to depart before our time. And, again, if suddenly, in the midst

Rom. vi. 8.

What it is to live unto the Lord.

Digitized by Google

and flower of our age, he call us away, we be always ready to depart.

9. *For Christ, therefore, died.* This is a confirmation of the reason [which] went before; for to the end he might prove that we are to die and live to the Lord, he said, we are in the power of Christ, whether we live or die. Now he showeth how worthily Christ challengeth unto himself this power over us, seeing he hath purchased the same by so great a price; for, by suffering death for our salvation, he hath gotten unto himself a dominion or lordship over us, which cannot be destroyed by death; and by rising again he hath received our whole life into his jurisdiction and guard; therefore, by his death and resurrection, he hath deserved, that as well in death as in life we should serve to the glory of his name. Whereas it is said here, *he rose again and revived*, it is as much of value as if it were said, that, by his resurrection, a new state of life was obtained to him. And because that life wherein he now liveth is not subject to any mutation, his kingdom also over us is eternal.

10. *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or also thou, why dost thou despise thy brother? for we shall all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.*

11. *For it is written, I live, saith the Lord, and every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess unto God.*

12. *So, then, every one of us shall give account for himself unto God.*

13. *Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but rather judge this, that no occasion of falling or offence be given to your brother.*

10. *But why dost thou judge.* Because he had addicted the life and death of us all unto Christ, thence he passeth to make mention of that judgment which the Father hath given to him, together with the dominion of heaven and earth. Whence he gathereth, that it is malapert boldness if any man usurp unto himself judgment over his brother, seeing, by such licentiousness, that authority is pulled away from Christ which he only hath received of the Father.

Digitized by Google

but first by the name of *brother* he bridleth this lust of judging. For if the Lord has ordained amongst us the law or right of brotherly society, an equality must needs be observed; therefore, every one, taking to himself the person of a judge, shall do naughtily. Secondly, he revoketh or calleth us unto that only Judge, from whom man cannot only not take away his authority, but also cannot escape his judgment. As it were, therefore, an absurd thing amongst men, if a guilty person, which were not worthy to lie upon the footstool, should rush unto the seat of judgment, so absurd is it that a Christian man should take unto himself liberty to judge his brother's conscience. Such, in effect, is the argument of James, saying, "He that judgeth his brother, judgeth the law; and he that judgeth the law, is not a keeper of the law, but a judge." And, on the contrary, (quoth he,) "There is one lawgiver, who can save and destroy." *Tribunal* is attributed unto Christ for the faculty of judging, as the voice of the archangel, whereby we shall be cited, is called, in another place, a trump, because, as it were, with his sound he shall pierce the minds and ears of all.

James iv. 11.

1 Thess. iv. 16.

11. *For it is written, I do live.* He seemeth unto me to have cited this testimony of the Prophet Esay, not so much for the proof of that sentence of the judgment of Christ, (which was undoubtedly believed of all Christians,) as to show that that judgment is to be looked for of all with great humility and submission, which the words themselves import. In his words going before he testified that Christ only was Judge over all men; now, by the words of the prophet, he declareth that all flesh ought to be humbled with the expectation of that judgment, which is noted by the bowing of knees. Howbeit, notwithstanding in that place of the prophet the Lord doth generally foreshow, that it should come to pass that his glory should be made manifest amongst all nations, and his majesty (which then was amongst a few, and, as it were, lurked in a corner of the world) should shine everywhere; yet, if we look into it more nearly, it is apparent that the full accomplishment thereof is not now extant, nor ever was in this world, neither yet is to be looked for in the ages to

Isa. xlv. 23.

The coming of Christ to judgment ought humbly to be looked for of all men.

Digitized by Google

come. God reigneth now no otherwise than by the gospel, neither is his majesty otherwise honoured aright, than while the same being known by his Word is reverenced. But the Word of God hath always his [its] enemies, which have frowardly resisted; and his [its] contemners, which have scoffed at it, as a trifling and fabulous thing. At this day, there are many such, and ever more will be. Hereby appeareth that this prophecy is, indeed, begun in this life; but is not perfected till that day of the last resurrection shall come, wherein all the enemies of Christ shall be thrown down, that they may become the footstool of his feet.

Furthermore, even that also could not be, except the Lord sat in judgment; therefore hath he well applied this testimony unto the tribunal of Christ. It is also a notable place to establish our faith concerning the eternal Deity of Christ; for it is God that speaketh there, and that God which hath
Isa. xlii. 8. once said, that he will not give his honour to another. Now, then, if that be fulfilled in Christ which he there challengeth to himself only, without doubt he doth manifest himself in Christ. And surely the verity of that prophecy appeared then clearly, when Christ gathered unto himself a people out of all the world, and brought them into the worship of his power and obedience of his gospel. Where-
Philip. ii. 9. unto Paul had respect when he said, that God gave a name to his Christ whereat every knee should bow; and it shall then fully appear, when he shall get upon his seat to judge both the quick and the dead, as all judgment in heaven and earth is given unto him of the Father. In the words of the prophet it is, "Every tongue shall swear unto me;" but seeing an oath is a part of the worship of God, though Paul have here *shall confess*, the sense varieth nothing; for the meaning of the Lord was simply to affirm that all men should not only acknowledge his power, but also by mouth and external gesture of the body, which he hath noted by the bowing of knees, show forth the confession of obedience.

12. *So then, every one.* This conclusion calleth us back unto humility and submission. Whereupon also he inferreth straightway that we should not judge one another, because

Digitized by Google

it is not lawful for us to take upon us the authority of judging, seeing of necessity we must not only be judged ourselves, but also must give an account. And out of the divers signification of the word *judging*, or *to judge*, he hath excellently drawn a contrary acception or signification; for, in the first place, he forbiddeth us to judge by condemning; in the second place, he commandeth that all the judgment of reason should be applied to the avoiding of offence; for, by the way, he reproveth those peevish carpers, who bend all their dexterity and sharpness of wit unto this, that they may have something to find fault withal in the life of their brethren. And, therefore, he commandeth that they rather have regard unto wariness or circumspection, because oftentimes, through their negligence, they either precipitate, or force their brethren into some offence.

To judge hath a twofold acception. In the first place. it is put for to condemn; in the second, for to be wary or circumspect.

14. *I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common of itself; but he that thinketh it to be common, to him it is common or unclean.*
15. *But if thy brother be grieved for thy meat, now walkest not thou charitably. Destroy not him through thy meat for whom Christ died.*
16. *Let not your commodity be evil spoken of:*
17. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
18. *For whoso in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

14. *I know, &c.* That he might prevent the objection of such as had profited so far in the gospel, that they put no difference between meats, he doth first set down what is to be thought of meats, as they are to be considered in themselves; secondly, he addeth, what offence may grow in the circumstance of the use of them. He pronounceth, therefore, that to a right and pure conscience no meat is impure, and that there is no impediment why we may not purely use the same, if ignorance and error did not let us; because, if any man imagine an uncleanness in his meat, he cannot freely use the same; but a little after he addeth, that we are not only to respect the meats themselves, but also our

What is simply to be thought of meats themselves.

Digitized by Google

brethren, before whom we eat; for we are not to count the use of God's benefits so common, that it should not be subject unto charity. His words, therefore, are as much in value as if he said, I know all meats are clean; and, therefore, I leave them free unto thee, I suffer thy conscience to be loose from all scruple. Finally, I do not simply drive thee from the meats themselves; but the regard of meats being laid apart, I would not have thy neighbour to be neglected of thee.

In this place he calleth that common which is profane, and which is without all difference used of the wicked, that it might be opposed against those things which are peculiarly sanctified for the use of faithful people. He saith that he knoweth and is persuaded of the purity of all meats, that he might put it out of all question. He addeth *in the Lord Jesus*, because through his benefit and grace we obtain this, that all creatures are sanctified unto us of the Lord, which creatures were otherwise cursed in Adam. And withal his meaning is, to set the liberty given of Christ against the servitude of the law, lest they should think they were holden with that observation from the which Christ had freed them. In the exception put down by the apostle, we are taught there is nothing so pure but it may be contaminated by an impure conscience; for it is only faith and godliness which sanctifieth all things unto us. And the faithless, as they are inwardly unclean, so they defile whatsoever they touch.

Titus i. 15.

15. *If thy brother be grieved.* Now he declareth by how many ways the offence of our brethren may corrupt the use of good things. And the first reason is, that charity is violated, if for so light a cause our brother be grieved; for it is contrary unto charity to give any an occasion of sorrow. A second reason, that whilst the weak conscience is wounded, the price of the blood of Christ is wasted; for the most abject brother is redeemed by the blood of Christ, and therefore it is not meet he should be destroyed for satisfying the belly. And we are too shamefully given to our lusts, if we prefer meat, a most vile thing, before Christ. The third

Reasons why we should not offend our brethren by meats.

Digitized by Google

reason is, that if the liberty purchased unto us by Christ be good, we ought to do our endeavour that it be not evil spoken of, and worthily dispraised of men, which cometh to pass when we use the gifts of God out of season. These reasons, therefore, ought to move us, that we run not rashly into offences for our liberty.

17. *For the kingdom of God is not.* Now, on the contrary, he teacheth that we may, without damage, abstain from the use of our liberty, because the kingdom of God doth not consist in those things. For those which serve either to erect or confirm the kingdom of God are no way to be omitted, whatsoever offences may follow thereon. If so be then, that, for charity's sake, a man may cease from the use of meats, God's honour not hindered, Christ's kingdom not prejudiced, and religion or piety not violated; they are not to be suffered, who for meat's sake trouble the Church. He useth the same arguments to the Corinthians, saying, "Meat for the belly, and the belly for meat; but God shall destroy them both." "For neither if we eat shall we have the more." In which words his meaning is briefly to show that meat and drink are things less worth, than that for their sakes the course of the gospel should be hindered.

1 Cor. vi. 13.
1 Cor. viii. 8.

But righteousness and peace. He hath, by the way, opposed these against meat and drink, not as though he reckoned all those things whereon the kingdom of Christ consists; but that he might declare how it standeth upon spiritual things. Albeit, to say the truth, he hath comprehended the sum in few words, namely, that we, being clear in ourselves, might be at peace with the Lord, and possess true joy of conscience, yea, and that by the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. Yet, notwithstanding, (as I said,) he hath applied these few to the present argument; for he that is made partaker of true righteousness, enjoyeth a most excellent and inestimable benefit, namely, the quiet joy of conscience; for he who hath peace with God what can he desire more? Whereas he joineth peace with joy, he seemeth unto me to express the manner of that spiritual joy; for howsoever the

The kingdom of Christ consisteth in spiritual things.

Digitized by Google

reprobate droop,[1] or lift up themselves, yet the conscience is not otherwise pacified and quieted, than whilst a man feeleth that God is reconciled and merciful to him; neither, indeed, is there any sound or true joy but which proceedeth from that peace. And although it is necessary, when mention is made of so great things, to preach the Spirit for the Author of them, yet in this place he would secretly oppose the Spirit against external things, that we might know how, without the use of meats, those things [which] appertain unto the kingdom of God may abide perfect and sound unto us.

18. *For whoso by these.* This reason is taken from the consequent; for it cannot be when a man is accepted of God, and approved of men, but the kingdom of God should live and flourish in him. Whoso, with a quiet and peaceable conscience, serveth Christ in righteousness, approveth himself as well before men as God. Wheresoever then is righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy, there is the perfect kingdom of God; so then it standeth not upon corporal things. Furthermore, he saith, that that man is acceptable to God who obeyeth his will; and testifieth that the same man is also approved of men, because they cannot but give testimony to that virtue [which] they see with their eyes. Not that the wicked do always spare the sons of God; yea, rather when there is none occasion, they pour out reproaches against them, and with feigned calumniations slander them unworthily; finally, by misconstruing their good deeds, they turn them to reproach. But Paul speaketh here of sincere judgment, which is mixed with no morosity, hatred, or superstition.

19. *Therefore, let us follow after such things as concern peace and mutual edification.*

20. *Do not destroy the work of God for meat. All things, indeed, are pure; but it is evil for him that eateth with offence.*

21. *It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do any other thing whereby thy brother may fall, or be offended, or be made weak.*

[1] "Torpeant," grow sluggish.

Digitized by Google

19. *Therefore, let us.* He doth what he can to revoke us from the bare consideration of meats, unto those greater things which ought to have the first place in all our actions, and so to overrule them. For we must eat to live; and live to serve the Lord. And he serveth the Lord who, through benevolence and courtesy, edifieth his neighbour. For under these two, namely, concord and edification, almost all the duties of charity are contained.

And lest that should be little esteemed, he repeateth that sentence which he had put down, namely, that corruptible meat is a thing unworthy for whose cause the building of the Lord should be destroyed. For wheresoever there is but a sparkle of godliness, there a man may see the work of God; which they overthrow, who through their importunity trouble the conscience that is yet weak. And it is to be noted, that edification is therefore joined unto peace, because sometime they do too much cocker one another, so that they hurt greatly by their obsequy.[1] Wherefore, there is choice to be kept in the study of obeying, and profit is to be considered, that we may willingly grant unto our brother whatsoever serveth to the furthering of his salvation; as Paul admonisheth in another place, "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient;" and straightway he addeth the reason, "because all things do not edify." And it is not in vain that he repeateth again, *not for meat*, signifying, that he requireth not an abstinence wherein there might be a hazard or loss of godliness, as he said of late; although we do not freely eat every meat, but abstain from the use of certain meats for our brethren's sake, yet the kingdom of God abideth perfect. 1 Cor. x. 23.

20. *All things, indeed, are pure.* Whereas he saith, *all things are pure*, that is by the way of concession (or granting;) and whereas he addeth, *but it is evil to the man that eateth with offence*, that is by the way of exception; as though he said, Indeed the meat is good, but the offence is evil; for meats are given us that we might eat them with-

[1] "Obsequio," by obsequiousness.

Digitized by Google

out the breach of charity; he therefore defileth the use of pure meat, who in eating of it violateth charity. Thereupon he inferreth that it is good to abstain from all things which may turn to the offence of our brethren. And he putteth down three words in order, *to fall, to be offended, to be weakened*, to this sense: Let no cause of falling be given to your brethren, yea, nor of offence, nor of infirmity. For to be weakened is less than to stumble or be offended; and to be offended is less than to fall. He is said to be weakened, into whose conscience there is put some wavering or doubting; to be offended, whose conscience is shaken with some greater perturbation; to fall, who in a manner is alienated from the study of religion.

What it is to be weakened, to be offended, and to fall.

22. *Thou hast faith? have it with thyself before God. He is blessed who judgeth not himself in that which he examineth.*
23. *He which judgeth, if he eat, is condemned; because he eateth not of faith. For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

22. *Thou hast faith?* That he might conclude, he showeth wherein the commodity of Christian liberty doth consist; whereby appeareth that they do falsely brag of liberty who cannot govern themselves in the use of it. He saith, therefore, that the knowledge of liberty, seeing it is of faith, doth properly respect God; so then, he who is indued with such certainty, he must content himself with the peace of conscience before God; neither is it necessary to come into possession before men. It followeth, then, that of set purpose it cometh to pass, if we offend our brethren in eating flesh; because no necessity enforceth us thereto. Besides this, it may easily appear how wickedly this place is wrested of many, who gather from hence that it is not greatly material how any doth behave himself in observing foolish and superstitious ceremonies, so that he keep a pure conscience before God; for Paul would nothing less, as the text itself doth testify; and ceremonies are ordained to the worship of God, and also they are part of our confession. Finally, they which pull faith from confession, do take from the sun his heat. Howbeit Paul here handleth no such

Digitized by Google

matter, but only disputeth of the free use of meat and drink.

Blessed is he that judgeth not himself. Here, first of all, he teacheth how we may lawfully use the gifts of God; secondly, how great an impediment ignorance is, that we urge not the unskilful above the measure of their infirmity. But he putteth down a general sentence, which is extended unto all actions. Blessed (quoth he) is that man [who] is not guilty[1] of evil to himself, if so be he do duly examine his deeds; for it cometh to pass that many commit abominable deeds without any scruple of conscience; but that is because their eyes being shut, they temerously[2] put forth themselves whither the blind and foolish intemperance of the flesh doth lead them; for there is great difference between numbness (or senselessness) and judgment. He, then, that maketh a choice in things (if, after the thing be well considered and weighed, he be not bitten[3] with the testimony of an evil conscience) is happy. For this peace only can make that our works please God. By this means that vain excuse is taken away which many pretend by ignorance, seeing their error is entangled with dulness and sluggishness. For if good intention (as they call it) were sufficient, in vain were that examination whereby the Spirit of God here esteemeth[4] the deeds of men.

23. *He that judgeth, &c.* Very well he hath expressed in one word, in the affection of a waving and uncertain mind what is necessary to be done. For he that judgeth[5] wavereth hither and thither, and is holden in suspense between divers deliberations, not knowing whereunto to incline. Seeing, then, the beginning of a good work is the certainty and, as it were, the pleasant security of a mind that is well stayed before God, there is nothing more contrary to the approbation of our works than wavering or doubting. And would to God this sentence were well grafted in the minds of men,

[1] "Consacius," conscious. [2] "Temere," rashly. [3] "Mordetur," gnawed. [4] "Æstimat," estimateth. [5] "Dijudicat," is undecided.

Digitized by Google

namely, that nothing is to be taken in hand but that of the which the mind is fully resolved that it is acceptable to God; men would not keep such a stir in many parts of their life, or waver, or thrust on themselves, with a blind force, wheresoever their own imagination carrieth them. For if our life be tied unto this modesty, that one should not touch a morsel of bread with a doubting conscience, how much greater circumspection ought to be had in the greatest things.

Nothing must be done with a wavering mind.

For whatsoever is not of faith. The reason of this condemnation, namely, that every work, how excellent and glorious soever it be, if yet it be not grounded upon a right conscience, is counted for sin. For God regardeth not the outward show, but the inward obedience of the heart. Of that only dependeth the estimation of our works. Furthermore, what kind of obedience is that, if any take upon him that of the which he is not persuaded [that] it is approved of God? Where, then, such doubting is, he is justly condemned of *prevarication*, because he doth[1] against the testimony of his conscience. The word *faith* is put here for a constant persuasion of the mind, and firm (as I may say) certainty; and that not every assurance, but such as is gathered of the truth of God. Therefore, wavering and doubtfulness do corrupt all our actions, how beautiful soever otherwise they be. Now, seeing a godly mind can nowhere find a sure stay but in the Word of God, here all feigned worshippings, and whatsoever works are devised by man's brain, do vanish away. For whilst that is condemned whatsoever is not of faith, that is rejected whatsoever is not grounded and approved by the Word of God. Although this, also, is not enough that that should be approved by the Word of God which we do, except the mind, trusting to that persuasion, do cheerfully prepare itself unto the work. Therefore, this is the beginning of a right life, to cleave unto the Word of God, and go wheresoever the same doth call us, lest our minds should waver.

Faith for a firm persuasion.

The beginning of a right life.

[1] "Pergit," proceeds.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XV.

1. *We who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*
2. *For every one of us ought to please his neighbour in that that* [which] *is good to edifying.*
3. *For Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The rebukes of those* [that] *rebuked thee fell upon me.*

1. *We who are strong.* Lest they who have profited more than others in the knowledge of God should think it unmeet that more burden should be laid upon them, he showeth how the strength ought to be bestowed wherein they excel others, namely, to support the weak, that they fall not. For as God appointeth those for the instructing of the ruder sort to whom he hath given greater measure of knowledge, so, look, whom he hath strengthened, to those he hath commended the weak, that they might be supported by their strength; for so ought all gifts be communicated amongst the members of Christ. The stronger, therefore, any is in Christ, the more he is bound to support the weak. Whereas he saith a Christian man ought not to please himself, he signifieth that he ought not to direct his study to satisfy himself; as they are wont to do who, being content with their own judgment, do carelessly neglect others. And, indeed, this is a most apt admonition for the present matter; because there is nothing more hindereth or letteth our obedience, than that every man is so much addicted to himself, that, others being rejected, he followeth only his own counsels and affections.

2. *For every one of us.* Here he teacheth that we are bound unto others; and, therefore, that it is our part to satisfy them, and hearken to them. Neither is there any exception, but we must apply[1] ourselves to our brethren when, accord-

[1] "Accommodare," accommodate.

Digitized by Google

ing to the Word of God, we may do it to their edification. Here, therefore, are two propositions, namely, that we not being content with our own judgment, and not resting upon our lusts or affections, ought to do our endeavour, and strive everywhere to satisfy our brethren. The other, that whilst we apply ourselves to our neighbour, we ought to have regard unto God, that our end be their edification. For a great many cannot be pleased unless thou cocker their lust; so that if thou wilt be gracious with a many, thou must not so much regard their salvation as satisfy their folly; neither mayest thou respect what is expedient, but what they covet to their own destruction. Thou must not, therefore, study to please such as like nothing but that is evil.

How we apply ourselves to our brethren.

3. *For Christ pleased not himself.* If it be meet the servant should refuse nothing that the Master taketh upon him, it were very absurd that we would covet to exempt ourselves from this necessity of bearing the infirmities of others, whereunto Christ, whom we rejoice to be our King and Lord, submitted himself; for he having omitted the regard of himself, did give himself wholly hereunto. For in him is truly verified, whatsoever the prophet saith—Psalm lxix. 9. And amongst other things, he also putteth this down, that the "zeal of the Lord hath even eaten him up;" and "the rebukes of them that rebuked the Lord fell upon him;" whereby he signifieth, that he burned with such zeal of the glory of God, and was taken with such desire of advancing his kingdom, that having forgotten himself, he was (as it were) swallowed up of this only cogitation;[1] that he had so consecrated himself unto the Lord, that it did grieve him at the heart so often as he saw the wicked profane his holy name. Although that second part, "of the rebukes of God," may have two acceptions,[2] either that he was no less grieved with the reproaches which the wicked did commit against God, than if he himself had borne them in his own person; or that it vexed him no less to see God injuriously dealt with-

Ps. lxix. 9.

[1] "Hac una cogitatione," this one thought. [2] "Quanquam secunda illa pars, de opprobriis Dei, bifariam intelligi potest," although this second part, concerning insults of God, may be understood in two ways.

Digitized by Google

by others, than if he had been the author of it himself. And if Christ reign in us, as he must needs reign in all his faithful, this sense or affection shall also flourish in our hearts, that whatsoever derogateth [from] the glory of God, shall grieve us no less than if it were resident in ourselves.

Now, then, let them go whose whole heart's delight is to get great honours of them who blaspheme the name of God, tread Christ under foot, both contumeliously rend, and also persecute with sword and fire his gospel. Surely it is not safe to be so greatly honoured of them of whom Christ is not only contemned, but also contumeliously handled.

4. *For whatsoever things are written aforehand, they are written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope.*
5. *And the God of patience and consolation give unto you that ye may altogether think one thing, according to Jesus Christ;*
6. *That with one mind and one mouth ye may glorify God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

4. *For whatsoever things.* This is the application of the example, lest any should think this to be too far-fetched, that he should exhort us to the imitation of Christ. Yea, verily, (quoth he,) there is nothing in the Scriptures which may not serve to your learning and institution[1] of your life. A notable place, wherein, whilst we understand there is no vain or unprofitable thing contained in the oracles of God, withal we are also taught to profit in the reading of the Scripture unto piety and holiness of life. Whatsoever, then, is set down in Scripture, let us labour to learn it; for it were contumely against the Holy Spirit, if we should think he hath taught any thing which were not material for us to know; secondly, whatsoever is taught there it doth tend to the increase of godliness. And although he speak of the Old Testament, yet is the same to be understood also of the writings of the apostles; for if the Spirit of God be elsewhere like itself, there is no doubt but now of the apos-

The use of the Old Testament is not done away from Christians.

[1] "Institutionem," training.

Digitized by Google

tles, as in old time by the prophets, he hath tempered his doctrine to the edification of his. Furthermore, by this place, fanatical spirits are notably overthrown, who brag that the Old Testament is done away, and belongeth not at all to Christians. For with what face can they turn Christians from those things which Paul testifieth to be ordained of God unto their salvation? And whereas he addeth, that *through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope*, it comprehendeth not all the parts of that profit which is to be gathered by the Word of God, but briefly noteth the chief end. For hereunto specially serve the Scriptures, that they might erect the minds of men, (being prepared unto patience, and strengthened by consolations,) unto the hope of eternal life, and keep them in the meditation thereof. The word *exhortation*, for the which others translate *consolation*, is not disliked of me; but that consolation agreeth better with patience, because this ariseth out of that. For then are we prepared to bear adversities patiently, when the Lord doth temper them with consolation. For the patience of the godly is not that hardness which the philosophers commend; but that meekness whereby we do willingly submit ourselves to God, whilst the taste of his goodness and fatherly love doth make all things sweet unto us. The same nourisheth and sustaineth hope in us that it fail not.

How God is called the God of patience.

5. *And the God of patience.* God is so called of the effects which before were attributed to the Scriptures, albeit in a very good manner, yet in a diverse. For God only is the author of patience and consolation, because by his Spirit he infuseth them both into our hearts, howbeit he useth his word as an instrument thereunto. For, first, he teacheth which is true consolation and which is true patience, then he inspireth and grafteth that doctrine in our minds. Furthermore, after he had admonished and exhorted the Romans to their duty, now he turneth unto prayer. Because he knew very well it was to no purpose to entreat of the duty of any man, unless God did inwardly accomplish that by his Spirit, which he spake by the mouth of a man. The

Digitized by Google

sum of his prayer is, that he would bring their minds into a true consent, and would cause them truly to agree amongst themselves. And withal he showed of what sort this bond of unity is, whilst he would they should consent according to Christ. For that is a miserable conspiracy which is out of God; and that is out of God which alienateth us from his truth. And to the end he might the rather make the consent [that] is in Christ commendable, he showeth how necessary it is; seeing God is not truly glorified of us unless all our hearts and tongues consent to his praise. It is to no purpose, therefore, that any should boast that he will glorify God after his manner; for God so esteemeth the unity of his servants, that he will not have his glory sounded amongst dissensions and contentions. This one consideration ought sufficiently to bridle the unruly riot of contending and brawling, which at this day beareth too great a sway in the minds of many.

7. *Therefore, receive one another, as Christ hath received you to the glory of God.*
8. *And I say that Jesus Christ was the minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers;*
9. *And the Gentiles ought to praise God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess thee amongst the Gentiles, and will sing unto thy name.*
10. *And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.*
11. *And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles: and magnify him together, all ye people.*
12. *And again, Esay saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he which shall rise to rule the nations; in him shall the Gentiles trust.*

7. *Therefore, receive one another.* He returneth unto his exhortation, for confirmation whereof he always retaineth the example of Christ. For he having embraced, not one or two of us, but altogether, hath so joined us together, that we ought to cherish one another, if that we will abide in his bosom. So, then, we shall confirm our vocation or calling if we separate not ourselves from those to whom the Lord

Digitized by Google

hath bound us. This parcel, *to the glory*, may be referred either unto us, or unto Christ only, or unto us and him together. Which latter doth like me best; to this sense, As Christ hath manifested the glory of his Father, in receiving us all into favour when we stood in need of mercy; so we, also, to the setting forth of the glory of the same God, ought to establish that conjunction which we have in Christ.

8. *And I say that Jesus Christ.* Now he showeth how Christ hath received us all; where he leaveth no difference between the Jews and Gentiles, save that he was first promised to the Jews, and, in a manner, peculiarly appointed to them before he should be exhibited to the Gentiles. Howbeit he showeth that even in that which was the cause of all contentions there was no difference between them; because he collected or gathered them both from a miserable dissipation or dispersion, and being gathered together hath brought them into the kingdom of the Father, that they might be one flock in one fold, under one Shepherd.

Thereupon he inferreth that they ought to agree amongst themselves, and not contemn one another, seeing Christ did contemn neither of them. First, therefore, he speaketh of the Jews, and saith, Christ was sent unto them, that he might fulfil the truth of God in performing the promises given to the fathers. And this is a singular honour, that Christ, being Lord of heaven and earth, became flesh, that he might serve to their salvation; for the more he humbled himself for their sake, the more he honoured them. And that he taketh as undoubted for a thing confessed, whereby it is more wonderful that there should be so great impudence in certain frenzied heads, that they doubt not to conclude in the flesh and tie unto this present world all the promises of the Old Testament. And lest the Gentiles should arrogate to themselves any dignity above the Jews, Paul plainly denounceth[1] that salvation which Christ brought, in respect of the covenant, to be proper unto the Jews; because, by his coming, he fulfilled that which the

[1] "Pronunciat," declareth.

Digitized by Google

Father in old time promised to Abraham, and so was the minister of that people. Whereby it followeth that the old covenant, indeed, was spiritual, notwithstanding it was annexed unto earthly figures. For that accomplishment of the which Paul now speaketh must needs be referred unto eternal salvation. Finally, lest any should cavil, that salvation was only promised to the nephews,[1] seeing the covenant was committed to the hands of Abraham expressly, he bindeth the promises to the fathers. Therefore, either the virtue of Christ shall be contained in corporal benefits, or the covenant made with Abraham is extended further than to the flesh.

9. *And the Gentiles for his mercy.* This is the other member, in confirming whereof, because it was doubtful, he stayeth longer. The first testimony which he citeth is taken out of Psalm xviii., which Psalm is rehearsed in Second Samuel, where, without doubt, is uttered a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ. Furthermore, Paul proveth the calling of the Gentiles thereby, because there is promised the confession of the glory of God amongst the Gentiles; for we cannot preach God truly but amongst such as do truly hear his praises whilst they are published of us. Wherefore, that the name of God might be celebrated amongst the Gentiles, they must needs be indued with knowledge, and come into the fellowship of the people of God; for thou mayest see this everywhere in the Scripture, that the praise of God cannot be preached but in the congregation of the faithful, whose ears are capable to hear his praise.

The calling of the Gentiles.

Psa. xviii. 49. 2 Sam. xxii. 50.

10. *Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.* Whereas they commonly interpret this verse as though it were taken out of the song of Moses, that I like not, because in that place Moses goeth about rather to terrify the adversaries of Israel with his greatness, than to invite them unto a common rejoicing. Therefore, I take it rather to be borrowed out of the 67th Psalm; where it is said, "Let the Gentiles rejoice

[1] "Nepotibus," to posterity.

Digitized by Google

and be glad; because thou judgest the people in equity, and
Psa. lxvii. 4. governest the nations in the earth." And whereas Paul hath added of his own, *with the people of God*, that he hath done by the way of explication; for there, indeed, the prophet joineth the Gentiles with Israel, and inviteth both of them to gather unto rejoicing, which cannot consist but in the knowledge of God.

11. *Praise him, all ye nations.* Neither is this place unaptly applied; for how should they praise God who know not his greatness? they can do that no more than call upon his name when they know it not.

It is, therefore, a very fit prophecy to prove the calling of the Gentiles. And that may better appear by a reason which is added there; for he biddeth them give thanks for
Psa. cxvii. 1. his truth and mercy.

Isa. xi. 10. 12. *Again, Esai, &c.* This prophecy is most excellent of all; for there the prophet (things being almost brought to desperation) comforteth the small remnant of the faithful, namely in this, that there should arise a graft out of the dry and dead stock of the house of David, and a Branch should flourish out of the despised root, that should restore the people of God to their former glory.

It is manifest by the description there put down that this plant or graft is Christ, the Redeemer of the world. Secondly, he addeth that he shall be erected for a sign to the Gentiles, that he might be unto them for their salvation. These words, verily, differ somewhat from the Hebrew text. For whereas we read here, *He doth rise*, the Hebrew text hath, *He shall stand for a sign*, which is all one; namely, that he should appear manifestly like a sign. For the word *hope*, they have *to seek;* but according to the common use of Scripture, to seek God is nothing else than to hope in him.

And the calling of the Gentiles is twice confirmed in this prophecy, first by that [which] is said, Christ must be erected for a sign unto them, which Christ reigneth among the faithful only; and, secondly, by that [which] is said, they shall hope in Christ; which cometh not to pass without the

Digitized by Google

preaching of the Word and enlightening of the Spirit. Hereunto agreeth the song of Simeon. But hope in Christ is a testimony of his Deity.

13. *And the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*
14. *And I myself, also, am persuaded of you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, and filled with all knowledge, and are able to admonish one another.*
15. *Nevertheless, brethren, I have somewhat more boldly after a sort written unto you, as it were putting you in remembrance, through the grace that is given me of God.*
16. *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ towards the Gentiles, consecrating the gospel of Christ, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.*

13. *And the God of hope.* Now also, as before, he concludeth with a prayer, wherein he wisheth that that might be given them of the Lord whatsoever he had commanded; whereby appeareth the Lord doth not measure his precepts by our strength or power of free will; neither doth he therefore command those things [which] concern our duty, that we, trusting to our own strength, might buckle ourselves to obedience; but he commandeth such things as stand in need of the help of his grace, that he might provoke us to the study of prayer.

Wherefore the Lord commandeth such things as we are not able to fulfil of ourselves.

And when he calleth God *the God of hope*, he hath respect unto the next verse; as though he said, That God, therefore, in whom we altogether hope, fill you with joy, that is, with alacrity of conscience; secondly, with unity and concord, and that in believing; because, to the end our peace may be approved of God, we must be knit together by pure and sound faith.

If any man had rather take this saying, *in believing*, to be put for *unto* or *into faith*, the meaning shall be, that they ought to apply their peace unto faith; for then we are rightly prepared unto faith, when we, being quiet and of one mind, willingly embrace that [which] is taught.

Digitized by Google

Yet is it better to say, that faith is joined to peace and joy, because it is the bond of holy and lawful concord, and the support of godly joy. Although that peace also might be understood which every one hath inwardly with God, yet the text leadeth us rather unto the former exposition. Furthermore, he addeth, *that ye might abound in hope*, because by that means also hope is confirmed and increased in us. This parcel, *by the power of the Holy Ghost*, noteth that all those are the gifts of God's bountifulness; and the word *power* hath his [its] emphasis, to set forth this wonderful power, whereby the Spirit worketh in us faith, hope, joy, and peace.

14. *And I am persuaded.* This is a *preoccupation*, or a kind of concession (and granting,) to appease the Romans, if they thought themselves to be nipped or dishonoured by so many and so serious[1] admonitions, and so, consequently, to be injured. He, therefore, excuseth himself, that he durst take upon him amongst them the person of a teacher and exhorter; and he saith that he did it, not because he distrusted their wisdom, goodness, and constancy, but because he was compelled thereunto by his office; for so he putteth away all suspicion of rashness,[2] which chiefly consisteth herein, if any man thrust himself into another man's office, or handleth those things which are not meet for him. Wherein we may see the singular modesty of this holy man, to whom nothing was more acceptable than to be nothing reckoned of, so that[3] the doctrine he preached might have authority. The Romans were very arrogant, yea, the name of their city made the poorest of them proud; so that they could hardly abide a teacher that was a stranger, yea, a barbarous fellow and a Jew.

Paul will not, in his own private name, fight with this haughtiness; but yet, as it were by stroking of it, he subdueth it, while he testifieth that he taketh these parts[4] upon him by reason he was an apostle.

[1] "Anxiis," anxious. [2] "Temeritatis," presumption. [3] "Modo," provided. [4] "Has partes," this part.

Digitized by Google

You are full of goodness, being filled with all knowledge, &c. There are two things specially required in him that giveth counsel; the first is humanity, which doth both move his heart to help his brethren with his counsel, and also temper his countenance and words with lenity; secondly, the dexterity of counsel or prudence, which may both get unto him authority, and also profit his auditors unto whom he directeth his speech; for there is nothing more contrary unto brotherly admonitions than malignity and arrogance, which causeth that we proudly contemn those that err, and had rather laugh them to scorn than correct them. Roughness, also, or bitterness, if it appear either in words or countenance, it maketh our admonition fruitless. Two things required in him that giveth counsel.

Finally, howsoever you excel, as well in the affection of humanity, as of lenity or gentleness, yet shall you not be meet to admonish, unless you excel in prudence and experience of things; therefore, he attributeth to the Romans both those faculties or abilities, giving testimony unto them that they are able enough to exhort one another without the help of others; for he confesseth they abounded both in courtesy (or gentleness) and also in knowledge (or experience;) whereby it followeth they were able to exhort.

15. *But I have written more boldly unto you, &c.* Now followeth his excuse, wherein, to the end he might be the more modest, by the way of concession (or granting,) he saith that he did somewhat boldly, in taking upon him to meddle in that thing which they were able to perform by themselves; but he addeth that he took upon him this boldness for the necessity of his office, because he was a minister of the gospel to the Gentiles; and, therefore, he could not pass them who were among the Gentiles. Yet he so humbleth himself, that he holdeth up the dignity of his office; for objecting the grace of God, whereby he was advanced unto that degree of honour, he could not suffer any thing to be contemned, which he did in the right of his apostleship.

Finally, he denieth that he hath taken upon him the office of a teacher, but of an admonisher, whose duty is to bring

Digitized by Google

into remembrance those things which otherwise are not unknown.

16. *Consecrating the gospel.* So I had rather translate it, than as Erasmus, at the beginning, *administering*. For there is nothing more certain than that Paul here alludeth unto the sacred mysteries which were accomplished by the priest. He therefore maketh himself a bishop or priest in the ministry of the gospel, who offereth in sacrifice the people which he winneth unto God; and in this manner he worketh or laboureth in the sacred mysteries of the gospel. And this assuredly is the priesthood of a Christian pastor, by bringing men into the obedience of the gospel, to offer them, as it were, in sacrifice unto God; and not as the Papists have hitherto proudly bragged, by the offering up of Christ to reconcile men unto God. Neither yet doth he here simply call ecclesiastical pastors priests, as by a perpetual title; but Paul, going about to commend the dignity and efficacy of the ministry, by occasion hath used this metaphor. Let this, therefore, be the end unto the preachers of the gospel in their function, namely, to offer unto God the souls of men, being purified by faith.

That which Erasmus afterward put down by the way of correction, namely, *sacrificing the gospel*, is not only improper, but also doth darken the sense. For the gospel is rather like a sword, wherewith the minister sacrificeth men unto God for offerings. He addeth, that such oblations are acceptable unto God; which maketh not only to the commendation of the ministry, but also to the singular comfort of them who yield themselves to be consecrated. Now, as the old sacrifices were dedicated to God by external sanctifications and washings, so also these oblations are consecrated to the Lord by the Spirit of sanctification, by the virtue of whose power inwardly working, they are separated from this world. For although the purity of the soul doth arise from the faith of the Word, yet because the voice of man by itself is ineffectual and dead, the office of purifying is truly and properly given to the Spirit.

Digitized by Google

17. *I have, therefore, wherein to glory by Christ Jesus, in those things which appertain unto God.*

18. *For I dare not speak any thing of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, into the obedience of the Gentiles in word and deed.*

19. *In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem, and all the coasts round about unto Illyricum, I have caused the gospel of Christ to abound.*

20. *Yea, so I enforced myself to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation:*

21. *But, as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of they shall see; and they which heard not shall understand.*

17. *I have, therefore.* After he had in a general sort commended his calling, that the Romans might know he was a true and undoubted apostle of Christ; now he addeth testimonies, whereby he proveth, that he did not only take upon him the office of an apostle, being laid upon him by the ordinance of God, but also did notably adorn the same. And also he putteth in mind of his fidelity, which he performed[1] in discharging that function. For it is to small purpose that we are ordained, unless we answer our calling, and discharge our duty. Neither doth he that with a desire to get glory, but because nothing was to be omitted which might procure grace and authority to his doctrine with the Romans. Therefore he glorieth in God, not in himself; because he respecteth nothing else than that God might be truly praised.[2] And whereas he speaketh only negatively, it is verily a sign of modesty, but it serveth to win credit unto those things which he goeth about to maintain; as if he said, The truth itself doth minister unto me so much matter of glory, that I need not to seek for false and foreign praises; I am content with true praises. Perhaps, also, his meaning was to prevent sinister reports, which he knew to be scattered abroad by evil persons; and therefore he foreshoweth that he will not speak but of things well known.

[1] "Præstiterat," had exhibited. [2] "Nisi ut solida laus ad Deum redeat," than that the whole praise may redound unto God.

Digitized by Google

18. *Into the obedience of the Gentiles.* This parcel noteth what his purpose is, namely, that he might make his ministry to be esteemed of with the Romans, lest his doctrine should be without profit. By the signs, therefore, he showeth that God, by the presence of his power, did give testimony to his preaching, and, in a manner, did seal his apostleship, so that now none ought to doubt but he was ordained and sent of the Lord. The signs are, *word*, *work*, and *miracles*; whereby appeareth that the name *work* containeth more than miracles. At length he concludeth, *in the power of the Spirit*; whereby he signifieth that these could not be done but by the Spirit. To be brief, he affirmeth that as well in teaching as doing, he had a power and virtue in preaching Christ, wherein the wonderful power of God appeared; secondly, he saith *miracles* were added, which were as seals for the surer knowledge of that thing. First, he putteth *word* and *work*, then he expresseth one kind, namely, the power of working miracles. So, also, it is taken with Luke, where he saith, Christ was mighty in word and deed. Also with John, where Christ himself sendeth the Jews unto his works, where they might have testimony of his Deity. Neither doth he simply name miracles, but doth adorn them with two titles. And whereas he saith, *The power of signs and wonders*, Peter, in the Acts, hath virtues, and signs, and wonders; and surely they are testimonies of God's power to awake men, that being astonied at the power of God, they might wonder at him, and also worship him; neither are they without signification, but they stir us up to understand somewhat of God. This is a notable place of the use of miracles, namely, that they should get unto God, amongst men, reverence and obedience. So thou readest in Mark, that the Lord confirmed his doctrine by miracles that followed. So Luke saith, that the Lord gave testimony to the word of his grace by miracles. It is manifest, therefore, that those miracles which seek the glory of creatures and not of God, which bring credit unto lies and not unto the Word of God, are of the devil. I refer the *power of the Spirit of God*, which he hath put in the third place, unto them both.

Luke xxiv. 19.

John v. 36.

Acts ii. 22.

The true use of miracles.

Mark xvi. 20.

Acts xiv. 3.

Digitized by Google

19. *That from Jerusalem even unto Illyricum.* He addeth also a testimony from the effect; because that success which did follow his preaching did pass all man's strength. For who could gather so many churches unto Christ, unless he were helped by the power of God? From Jerusalem unto Illyricum (quoth he) I have spread abroad the gospel; neither have I done that by a direct course hasting unto the end, but everywhere about, going through all those regions [which] are between. But the verb πεπληρωμενα, which, according to some, we have translated, *to fill*, doth signify to make perfect, and supply that [which] is wanting. Whereupon πληρωμα is called of the Grecians as well perfection as a supplement, or fulfilling. I do willingly expound it thus, that he dispersed the preaching of the gospel, as it were by supplying it.[1] For others had begun before, but he did scatter it abroad further.

20. *Yea, I enforced myself to preach the gospel.* Because it stood Paul upon, not only to prove himself to be a servant of Christ and pastor of the Christian Church, but also to win unto himself the person and office of an apostle, that he might the rather be heard of the Romans; he putteth here a proper and peculiar note of apostleship. For the office of an apostle is, to sow the gospel where it was not preached before, according to that commandment, Go, preach the gospel to every creature; which ought diligently to be noted, lest we draw that unto an universal example, which doth peculiarly agree unto the order of apostles. Neither is it to be disliked, that there is a successor substituted in his place who did build the Church. So, then, apostles are, as it were, the founders of the Church; pastors which succeed them ought to maintain and increase that building which was raised up by them. He calleth that another man's foundation which was laid by another man's hand; otherwise Christ is the only stone whereon the Church is founded.

What it is to be an apostle.

Mark xvi. 15.

1 Cor. iii. 11; and Eph. i. 22.

21. *But, according as it is written.* He confirmeth that by

[1] "Quod evangelii prædicationem quasi supplendo diffuderit," that he spread the preaching of the gospel, as it were, by way of supplement.

Digitized by Google

the prophecy of Esai, which he said of the sign of his apostleship. For he, in the 52d chapter and 10th verse, when he speaketh of the kingdom of the Messiah, amongst other things foreshoweth, that the same must be dilated over all the world. And that the knowledge of the same Christ must be brought unto the Gentiles, to whom his name was not heard of before. It was expedient this should be done by the apostles, to whom specially commandment was given; therefore, the apostleship of Paul was thereby manifest that this prophecy is fulfilled in him. Wickedly shall any man go about to draw this unto the office of pastors, because we know in Churches rightly ordered, where the verity of the gospel was received long ago, the name of Christ must be continually preached. To this end, therefore, was Paul a preacher of Christ, yet unknown to foreign nations, that, after his departure in every place, the same doctrine might daily sound forth in the mouth of the pastors; for it is sure that the prophet intreateth of the beginnings of the kingdom of Christ.

Isa. lii. 10.

22. *Therefore, I have also been often let to come unto you.*
23. *But now having no more place in these countries, and being desirous many years ago to come unto you;*
24. *When I shall take my journey into Spain, I will come unto you. For I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, after that I have been somewhat filled with your company.*

22. *Therefore, &c.* Now, also, he draweth that to another end which he said of his apostleship, namely, to excuse himself that he never came unto them, seeing he was no less ordained for them than for others. By the way, therefore, he declareth that sowing the gospel from Judea even unto Illyricum, he did (as it were) accomplish a certain course enjoined him of the Lord, which, being finished, he purposed not to neglect them. And lest, in the meanwhile, they should think they were neglected, he taketh away that suspicion, when he testifieth there was no want of will long ago.

Digitized by Google

That he, therefore, did it no sooner, that came to pass by a just let; now he putteth them in hope so soon as he may for his calling.

And out of this place a weak argument is drawn to prove Paul's going into Spain. For it followeth not straightway that he did it, because he was so minded; for he speaketh only of hope, whereof he, as well as others of the godly, many time might be made void.[1]

24. *For I trust.* He toucheth the cause, why he wished of long time, and now purposed to come unto them, namely, that he might see them, and might enjoy their sight and communication, and also might show himself unto them according to his office. For under the coming of the apostles is also contained an increase of the gospel, when he saith, *That I may also be brought on in my way thither by you;* thereby he declareth how much he promiseth unto himself of their courtesy (or humanity;) which we have admonished before to be a notable kind of getting favour.[2] For look by how much every one heareth that greater trust is given to him, by so much the more he thinketh himself to be bound, because we count it filthy and uncivil to deceive the opinion conceived of us. And whereas he addeth, *after that I have been somewhat filled with your company,* he testifieth the mutual benevolence of his mind towards them, whereof that they should be persuaded it was greatly necessary for the gospel.

25. *But now I go to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.*
26. *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a communication to the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.*
27. *It hath pleased them, I say, and their debtors they are. For if they have made the Gentiles partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.*
28. *When I have, therefore, performed this, and have sealed them this fruit, I will pass by you into Spain.*
29. *And I know that when I shall come unto you, I shall come in the abundance of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

[1] "Frustrari," be frustrated. [2] "Optimum conciliandæ gratiæ genus," is the best method of conciliating favour.

Digitized by Google

25. *But now.* Lest they should look for his coming straightway, and think themselves mocked (or deceived,) if he came later than they looked for, he foreshoweth what business he had then presently, that he could not forthwith take that journey, namely, that he went to Jerusalem to bear the alms which was gathered in Achaia and Macedonia. Yet withal hereby he taketh occasion to pass unto the commendation of that communication,[1] to the end that, by a kind of insinuation, he might provoke them unto the like; for, although he doth not plainly ask it, yet, while he saith that Achaia and Macedonia ought to do it, he inferreth what was the duty of the Romans, who were in the same predicament. And that he had respect thereto he plainly confesseth to the Corinthians. "I boast (quoth he) of your readiness to all churches, that they might be provoked by your example." And it was an argument of singular love, that when the Grecians heard that the brethren which were at Jerusalem stood in need, they considered not by how great distance of places they were severed from them; but counting them sufficiently nigh with whom they were joined in the bond of faith, did relieve their poverty with their abundance. And we are to note the word *communication*, which he useth; for it expresseth very well with what affection we ought to succour the want of our brethren, namely, because for the unity of the body there is a common and mutual consideration. I have not translated the pronoun τινα, because it often aboundeth[2] with the Grecians, and it seemeth to diminish the emphasis of this place. Whereas we have turned to *minister*, in Greek is the participle *ministering;* but that seemed more fit to express the mind of Paul. For he excuseth, that through just occasion[3] he was stayed, that he could not straightway with haste come unto Rome.

2 Cor. ix. 2.

Distance of place or diversity of nation ought not to let us from being bountiful to the faithful.

27. *And their debtors they are.* Every man doth see, that that which is here said of debt, is not said so much for the cause of the Corinthians as of the Romans. For the Corinthians, or Macedonians, were no more indebted unto the

1 "Collationis," contribution.
2 "Abundat," is superfluous.
3 "Occupatione," occupation.

Digitized by Google

Jews than the Romans. And he addeth the cause of this bond,[1] namely, that they had received the gospel from them; he taketh an argument from the comparison of the less with the greater, which he also useth in another place, namely, 1 Cor. ix. 11. that that recompence ought not to be thought unjust, or grievous unto them, who for spiritual things give carnal, which by many degrees are more base. And this showeth the dignity of the gospel, that it doth not only denounce them bond to the ministers thereof, but also to all that nation from whom their ministers came. And note the verb λειτουργησαι, *for to minister*, which signifieth to do his office in the commonwealth, and to undertake the burden of his calling; sometimes, also, it is used in respect of sacred things. And I doubt not but Paul signifieth that it is a kind of sacrifice, when the faithful give of their own to relieve the poverty of their brethren. For so they do that duty of charity which they ought to do, and also they offer unto God a sacrifice of a sweet savour; but properly in this place he did respect that mutual right of compensation.

28. *When I shall have sealed this fruit unto them.* I dislike it not that some do think here is an allusion unto the manner of the old fathers, who were wont to shut up with rings or signets those things they would have safe. In this sort Paul commendeth his faith and integrity, as though he said, he were a sincere keeper of the money committed to him, no otherwise than if it were sealed unto him.[2] By the name of *fruit*, he seemeth to understand the increase which he said of late to come unto the Jews by the sowing of the gospel; like as the field doth nourish his [its] dresser by bearing of fruit.

29. *And I know, that when I shall come.* These words may be understood two ways. 1. The first sense is, that he should find at Rome a plentiful fruit of the gospel; for this is the blessing of the gospel, when it fructifieth by good works. For whereas some restrain them unto alms, I do

[1] "Obligationis," obligation. [2] "Obsignatam ferret," were carrying it under seal.

Digitized by Google

not like it. 2. Or, to the end he might make his coming unto them more worthy to be wished for, he saith, that he hopeth it should not be unprofitable, because it should bring great increase unto the gospel, which he calleth the fulness of blessing for a full blessing; whereby he signifieth prosperous success and increase. And this blessing depended partly on his administration and partly on their faith; so, then, he promiseth that his coming unto them should not be in vain, upon whom he should not lose the grace given to him, but should bestow it well, through that alacrity of mind [which] was in them to receive the gospel. The first exposition is more received, and also doth like me better, namely, that he hoped to find that [which] he chiefly wished; that is, the gospel to flourish with them, and to proceed by notable successes, because they would excel in sanctity, and all kind of virtues. For he showeth the cause of his desire, namely, that he hoped for some singular joy by the sight of them, whom he should see to flourish with spiritual riches of the gospel.

30. *And I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.*

31. *That I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea; and that my ministry, which I undertake towards Jerusalem, may be acceptable to the saints:*

32. *That with joy I may come unto you by the will of God, and together with you may be comforted. And the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*

30. *And I beseech you, brethren.* By many places it is sufficiently known how greatly Paul was hated in his own nation, for false slanders, as though he taught a falling away from Moses. He knew how much reproaches could do to oppress the innocent; and specially with those [who] are carried with a rash zeal. Hereunto also came the testification of the Spirit, whereof he maketh mention in the Acts. Whereby he was oftentimes forewarned, that bonds and afflictions were at hand for him at Jerusalem; therefore, the more danger he saw, the more he was moved; hence came

Acts xx. 23.

Digitized by Google

it he was so careful to commend his health unto the churches; neither let us marvel that he was so careful over his life, wherein he knew so great danger of the Church to be handled.

Therefore, the vehemency [which] is in this obtestation beareth witness how greatly the godly mind was troubled, while unto the name of the Lord he addeth the love of the Spirit, whereby the saints ought to embrace one another; but yet in so great fear he ceaseth not to go on, neither doth he so fear danger, but he was ready to die willingly.

Howbeit, he armeth himself with the remedies given unto him of God; for he calleth for the help of the Church, that being holpen by their prayers, he might thereby feel some comfort, according to the promise of the Lord: "Where two or three shall be gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them; and of whatsoever thing they shall consent in earth, they shall obtain it in heaven." And lest any should think this were a remiss, or light commendation, he beseecheth them by Christ, and the love of the Spirit; and that is called the love of the Spirit, wherein Christ doth join us together, because it is not of flesh, nor of the world, but of the Spirit, which is the bond of our unity. Seeing, then, it is so great a benefit of God to be holpen by the prayers of the faithful, that even Paul himself, an elect vessel of God, thought it was not to be neglected of him, what intolerable litherness[1] shall it be, if we wretches, and men of no price, do contemn it; howbeit, out of such places, to take occasion to maintain intercessions unto dead saints, is a token of too much impudency.

Matth. xviii. 20.

What is the love of the Spirit.

Prayer is the only haven of refuge for the servants of God in distress.

That ye might strive with me. Erasmus hath translated it well, that *ye might help me labouring;* but because the Greek phrase hath more force, I chose rather to translate it word for word; for, both by the word *strive,* he signifieth with what perplexities he was pressed; and when he biddeth them help him in this fight, he teacheth what affection the prayers of the godly for their brethren ought to have; namely, that they take upon them their person, as though

[1] "Ignaviæ," Sluggishness, heartlessness.

Digitized by Google

they were plunged in the same necessity; lastly, also it showeth what effect they have; for he which commendeth his brother to the Lord, by taking unto him part of his necessity, doth ease him so much. And surely if our strength consist in the invocation of the name of God, we can no way better confirm our brethren, than by calling upon the name of God for them.

31. *That my ministry towards Jerusalem.* The slanderers, by accusing him, had so prevailed, that he also feared lest his office should be scarcely acceptable at his hands, which otherwise, in so great necessity, was convenient or seasonable. And hereby appeareth his wonderful gentleness, that he ceased not to take pains for those of whom he doubteth whether he should be thankfully accepted or no.

This mind we ought to follow, that we cease not to do good unto them of whose thankfulness we are not assured. And note, that he vouchsafeth them with the name of saints, to whom he feareth lest he should be suspected and scarce welcome; he knew, also, that the saints sometimes might be carried by false reports into sinister opinions, and although he knew they did him injury, yet he ceaseth not to speak reverently of them. When he addeth, *that I may come unto you*, he signifieth that this prayer is also profitable for them, and it were good for them he were not killed in Judea. Hereunto appertaineth the parcel, *with joy;* for this also should be profitable for the Romans, that he might come unto them merry and void of all sorrow, to the end he might more courageously and stoutly bestow his labour upon them. And by the word *refresh*, or *delight*, he showeth how assuredly he was persuaded of their brotherly love. The parcel, *by the will of God*, admonisheth how necessary it is diligently to pray, because God only, by his providence, doth direct all our ways.

And the God of peace. By the note of universality, I gather that he doth not simply wish that God might be present and favour the Romans, but that he might govern every of them; for I take the epithet of peace to be referred

Digitized by Google

unto the present circumstance, that God, the author of peace, might preserve them altogether.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *And I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, which is a faithful minister of the Church at Cenchrea ;*
2. *That ye receive her in the Lord, as it is meet for the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she shall stand in need of your aid : for she hath assisted many, and me also.*
3. *Salute Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-helpers in Christ Jesus,*
4. *Who for my life have laid down their own necks ; to whom not I only give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles ;*
5. *And the church that is in their house. Salute my beloved Epœnetus, which is the first-fruits of Achaia in Christ.*
6. *Greet Mary, which bestowed great labour on us.*
7. *Salute Andronicus and Junia, my cousins and fellow-prisoners, which are notable amongst the apostles, and were in Christ before me.*
8. *Salute Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.*
9. *Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.*
10. *Salute Apelles, approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' friends.*
11. *Salute Herodion, my kinsman. Salute them which are of the friends of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.*
12. *Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, which women labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which woman hath laboured much in the Lord.*
13. *Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.*
14. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Mercurius, and the brethren which are with them.*
15. *Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.*
16. *Salute one another with an holy kiss. The Churches of Christ salute you.*

Digitized by Google

1. *And I commend unto you, &c.* A good part of this chapter is spent in salutation, which, because they have no difficulty, it were to no purpose to stand long upon them. I will only touch those things which require some light of exposition.

First of all, he commendeth Phœbe, to whom he gave this epistle, to be brought. And, first, he commendeth her by her office, because she had an honest and holy ministry in the Church. Secondly, he bringeth another cause why they ought to receive her, and do unto her all duties, because she had always bestowed herself upon all the godly.

Therefore, because she is a minister of the Church at Cenchrea, even thereby he commandeth she should be received in the Lord. And when he addeth, *as it is meet for the saints*, he inferreth that it were unmeet for the servants of Christ if they should show no honour nor bountifulness towards her. And surely seeing it becometh us to embrace all the members of Christ, then ought we to embrace them which bear some public office in the Church, and to reverence them, and to love and honour them in a special manner. Secondly, as she was always officious[1] towards all, so he commandeth that she should be holpen now again in her affairs. For it is a point of humanity not to forsake him who, by nature, is ready to do good, if, at any time, he stand in need of the help of others. But to the end he might the rather move their minds, he reckoneth himself also among them to whom she did good. Finally, this ministry of the which he speaketh, of what sort it was he teacheth in another place. For as the poor were maintained out of the common treasury, so they were looked unto by a public office. And unto this charge were widows chosen, who being loose from domestical cares, and hindered with no children, did covet to consecrate themselves wholly unto God by the duties of charity; therefore they were received into this function as though they were bound and tied; as he that setteth[2] his labour, ceaseth to be free and at his own pleasure.[3] Whereupon the apostle charged

1 Tim. v. 9.

[1] "Officiosa," kind, dutiful.
[2] "Locans," who hires out.
[3] "Sui juris," his own master.

Digitized by Google

them to have violated their faith who afterward did renounce the office they had once taken upon them. And because they were to live a single life, he forbiddeth them to be chosen under threescore years; namely, because he saw that the perpetual vow of single life was dangerous, yea, pernicious, to such as were under that age. That holy office, and profitable for the Church, the estate of things waxing worse, did degenerate unto the idle order of nuns; which order, albeit it was corrupt even from its first original, and contrary to the Word of God, yet now it is so fallen from that beginning, that there is no less difference than between some holy place of chastity and a stew.

1 Tim. v 9.

The coming up of nuns.

3. *Salute Prisca and Aquila.* Those testimonies which he giveth here unto many do partly tend to this end, that whilst they are had in honour who are honest and worthy, both honesty itself might be honoured, and they might have authority with such as could and would profit more than others; partly that they might answer to their former life, neither might they faint in the course of godliness, or their godly zeal quail.[1]

It is a singular honour which he giveth here to Prisca and Aquila, specially in a woman. Whereby the modesty of the holy man the rather appeareth, who neither thinketh scorn to have, nor yet is ashamed to acknowledge a woman for his companion in the work of the Lord. And this was the wife of Aquila himself, whom Luke calleth Priscilla.

Acts xviii. 2.

4. *To whom not I only.* Because Prisca and Aquila did not spare their own life for the defence of the life of Paul, he testifieth that he himself privately doth give them thanks; yet he addeth, that thanks also are given unto them of all the Churches, that by this example he might also move the Romans. And worthily was the life of one man so dear and precious to all the Gentiles, for it was an incomparable treasure; wherefore, it is no marvel though all the Churches of the Gentiles thought themselves bound to [be]

[1] "Languescat," grow languid.

Digitized by Google

his preservers. That which he addeth of the church in their house is worth the noting. For he could not more honourably adorn their family than with the title of *the Church*. For I do not like the word *congregation*, which Erasmus hath translated; for it is evident that Paul, by the way of honour, hath used the sacred name of the Church.

5. *Who is the first-fruits.* This is an allusion unto the ceremonies of the law. For because men are sanctified unto God by faith, they which obtain the first place in the oblation are fitly called the first-fruits. Furthermore, as every one was the foremost, in respect of time, called unto the faith, so Paul doth give unto him the prerogative of honour; but this hath place whilst the end answereth the beginning. And surely it is a singular honour, when God vouchsafeth to choose any for first-fruits. For by the continuance of time there cometh a greater and more ample proof or trial of faith, whilst they which first begun are not weary of running well. He testifieth again his thankfulness, whilst he maketh mention of those things Mary did for him. And it is sure he ascribeth these praises, that he might make them more commendable to the Romans, whom he praised.

It is no small honour when God chooseth any for first-fruits.

7. *Salute Andronicus.* Although Paul is wont to make no great account of kindred, and other things appertaining to the flesh, yet because that consanguinity which Junia and Andronicus had with him, might greatly help that they might be the more easily known, he doth not neglect that praise also. There is more force in the second speech[1] of praise, whilst he nameth them his fellow-captives; because amongst the ornaments of Christian warfare bonds are not reckoned in the last place. Whilst, in the third place, he nameth apostles, he taketh not this word in [its] proper and usual signification. But he extendeth it further; namely, unto all those who do not only instruct one church, but for the publishing of the gospel every where do bestow their

The name Apostle largely taken.

[1] "Elogio," title.

Digitized by Google

labour. They, therefore, who, by carrying the doctrine of salvation hither, and thither did plant churches, are generally in this place called apostles. For other where he restraineth it unto that principal order, which Christ at the beginning ordained in his twelve disciples. Otherwise it were absurd that so great dignity should be ascribed unto them amongst few. Now, because they had by faith embraced the gospel before Paul, he doubteth not in that respect to prefer them before himself.

11. *Who are of the friends of Narcissus.* It had been a thing too bad, that Peter should be omitted in so long a catalogue, if he had been then at Rome. But he must needs have been there, if we believe the Romans. Howbeit if in doubtful things there is nothing better than to follow a probable conjecture, no man of indifferent judgment will believe that is true [which] they affirm. For he had never been omitted of [by] Paul. But it is worth the noting, that none of those glorious and honourable titles are heard here, by the which it might be gathered that noblemen were Christians; for whomsoever Paul reckoneth, they were obscure and ignoble at Rome. I take the Narcissus, whom Paul nameth here, to be the freeman of Claudius, a man famous for many mischievous and naughty deeds; whereby the goodness of God is more wonderful, which pierced into that impure house, and abounding with all wickedness; not that Narcissus himself was converted unto Christ; but this was a great matter, that a house, as it were like unto hell, should be visited with the grace of Christ. And seeing they did worship Christ sincerely, who lived under a huge lion,[1] under a most cruel spoiler and corrupt man, there is no cause why servants should tarry for their masters, but every one should follow Christ for himself. Yea, the exception added by Paul doth declare that his family was divided, so that there were but a few which believed.

16. *Salute one another in an holy kiss.* It is everywhere

[1] "Sub fœdo lenone," under a foul pander. The translator appears to have read "leone."

Digitized by Google

apparent by the Scriptures, that a kiss was an usual and common token of good-will amongst the Jews; perhaps less usual amongst the Romans; neither was it altogether strange amongst them, save that it was not lawful to kiss women, other than their kinswomen only. Howbeit, that grew into a custom with them in old time, that Christians, before the communication of the Supper, did kiss one another, to testify their good-will by that sign; then afterward they gave alms, that they might confirm that in deed and effect which they represented by a kiss, as appeareth out of a certain homily of Chrysostom. Hence came that rite, which is at this day among the Papists, of kissing the Paxe, and making oblation. The one whereof is mere superstition without fruit; the other serveth to no end, but to fill up the covetousness of the priests, if yet it may be filled. Nevertheless, Paul seemeth not here precisely to exact a ceremony, but only exhorteth them to maintain brotherly love, which he discerneth from profane friendships of the world, which for the most part are either hypocritical, or are brought to pass by naughty deeds, or are retained by evil means, and they never tend to a right end. And wishing health as much as in him lay from the Churches, he studieth to bind all the members of Christ among themselves with the mutual bond of love.

Whence the kissing of the paxe proceeded.

17. *And I beseech you, brethren, mark them diligently which stir up division and offences against the doctrine which you have already learned, that you may avoid them.*
18. *For they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and, by fair speech and flattering, do deceive the hearts of the simple:*
19. *For your obedience is come abroad among all. I am glad, therefore, of you; but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple to that which is evil.*
20. *And the God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

17. *And I beseech you, &c.* Now he putteth an exhorta-

Digitized by Google

tion, whereby all Churches stand in need now and then to be called on;[1] because the ministers of Satan are always at hand by occasions to trouble the kingdom of Christ. And two ways they go about to make this disturbance; for either they sow dissensions, whereby the minds of men are distracted from the unity of the truth, or they stir up offences, whereby they may be alienated from the love of the gospel. That cometh to pass, whilst the truth of God is scattered and drawn asunder with new doctrines, and devised of men; this whilst by divers deceits it is made odious and contemptible. Whoso, therefore, do either of these, he commandeth they should be marked, lest they deceive and beguile the simple; secondarily, he biddeth they should be avoided, because they are hurtful. Neither is it without cause that he requireth here attention or circumspection of the faithful; because oftentimes by our negligence and recklessness it cometh to pass, that such lewd fellows do greatly hurt the Church before they be met withal; also, very often they creep in to hurt with wonderful subtlety, except they be wisely considered. And note, that he speaketh unto such as were instructed in the pure doctrine of God; for it is a wicked and horrible divorcement, to divide those [who] do consent in the verity of Christ. But it is an impudent detraction or surmise,[2] under the pretence of peace and unity, to defend conspiracy in lies and wicked doctrines. There is, therefore, no cause why the Papists should seek a colour out of this place to procure[3] hatred against us; because we do not resist or pull asunder the gospel of Christ, but the lies of Satan, wherewith the gospel hath hitherto been darkened. Yea, Paul showeth plainly, that he doth not, without exception, condemn every dissension, but such as divideth Catholic faith.[4] For there is great weight in this saying, *Which you have learned;* because, before that the Romans were taught aright, they must needs depart from their old manners and institutions of their fathers.

Two ways whereby the wicked labour to hinder the course of the gospel.

[1] "Vellicari," to be stirred up.
[2] "Calumnia," calumny.
[3] "Ad conflandam," to stir up.
[4] "Sed quæ orthodoxæ fidei consensum dissipant," but those which destroy agreement in the orthodox faith.

Digitized by Google

A mark to know false prophets.

18. *For they which are such.* He addeth a perpetual note, whereby false prophets may be known from the servants of Christ, namely, that they seek not the glory of Christ, but serve their belly. Yet because they creep in craftily, and, by taking upon them the person of another, do hide their malice, withal he noteth what crafts they use, lest any should be deceived, namely, that by fair speech they win favour unto them. The preachers of the gospel also have their gentleness and sweetness, but yet joined with liberty or boldness, that neither they flatter men with vain praises, or cocker their vices; but those deceivers, both by their flattery steal unto them the hearts of men, and also spare and cocker vices, that they might hold them bound. He calleth such simple as are not sufficiently circumspect to beware of deceits.

19. *For your obedience.* This is a preoccupation or preventing, whereby he showeth that he doth not therefore admonish them as though he thought amiss of them, but because it is easy to fall here; as if he said, Surely your obedience is commended everywhere, so that there is cause why I should be glad of you. Yet seeing that oftentimes men fall here through simplicity, I would have you rude and simple to commit evil, but in that [which] is good, that is, so often as is expedient for the conservation of integrity, I would have you very prudent. Here we see what simplicity is commended in Christians; lest they who at this day count sottish ignorance of the Word of God for a high virtue should pretend this title. For although he praise the Romans that they were obedient and tractable, yet he would have prudence and choice to be added, lest their lightness of belief should be a prey to every deceit. Therefore, he so rejoiceth of them that they are without fraud, that yet he would have them wise to beware. That which followeth, namely,

What simplicity is commended unto Christians.

20. *God shall tread Satan,* is rather a promise to strengthen them than a prayer. For he exhorteth them that they fight courageously against Satan, promising they should shortly

Digitized by Google

have the victory. Indeed, he is once overcome of Christ, but yet not so but he may continually renew war. He promiseth, therefore, the last putting of him to flight, which appeareth not in the midst of the battle,[1] although he speak not only of the last day, wherein assuredly Satan shall be trodden under feet; but seeing Satan, at that time, as it were, his reins being loose or burst, did proudly disturb all things, he promiseth that shortly it would come to pass that the Lord would subdue him, and as it were give him to be trodden under feet. Straightway followeth his prayer, that the grace of Christ might be with them, that is, that they might enjoy all those blessings which are promised[2] for us by Christ.

21. *Timothy, my fellow-labourer, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.*
22. *I, Tertius, which wrote out this Epistle, salute you in the Lord.*
23. *Gaius, my host, and of the whole Church, saluteth you. Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.*
24. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*
25. *To him, now, that is able to confirm you according to my gospel, namely, the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began,*
26. *But now hath been opened and published among all nations, by the Scriptures of the prophets, at the commandment of the everlasting God, for the obedience of faith;*
27. *To God, I say, only wise, be praise, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.*

Written to the Romans from Corinth, and sent by Phœbe, servant of the Church which is at Cenchrea.

21. *Timothy, my fellow-labourer, &c.* The salutations he

[1] "Promittit ergo ultimam profligationem, quæ non apparet in medio certamine," he therefore promises ultimate defeat, though there is no appearance of this while the battle is raging. [2] "Parta," procured.

Digitized by Google

ascribeth serve partly to maintain love amongst those [who] were far asunder, partly that the Romans might know the subscription of their brethren in the Epistle; not that Paul stood in need of the testimony of others, but because the consent of the godly availeth much. And the Epistle, as we may see, is concluded with the praise of God and thanksgiving; for he maketh mention of that singular benefit of God, namely, that he hath vouchsafed the Gentiles with the light of the gospel; wherein appeareth his infinite and unspeakable goodness. Although this praise hath also in it that which may serve to set up and establish the confidence of the godly, that their minds being erected unto God, they may assuredly look for all those things which are here ascribed to him; and also by his former benefits may confirm their hope, touching that [which] is to come. But because, by gathering many things into one sentence, he hath made a long period (or stop,) which is wrapped with a disordered placing of words, every member is to be divided of us.

First, he giveth to God only all glory. Secondly, to the end he might show how it is due unto him, by the way, he rehearseth certain virtues of his, whereby appeareth [that] he only is worthy of all praise. He saith, he is *only wise*; which praise, whilst it is given to him, it is taken from all the creatures; although Paul seemeth, after he hath spoken of the secret counsel of God, purposely to have added this praise, that he might draw all men into reverence and admiration of the wisdom of God; for we know, when men, in the works of God, find not out the cause, how ready they are to murmur.

By adding that God is *able to confirm* the Romans, he assureth them of final perseverance. And that they might more certainly depend on his power, he addeth, that the same is testified unto us in the *gospel*; where thou seest the gospel doth not only bring unto us present grace, but also doth bring unto us assurance of grace still to continue.[1]

[1] "Perpetuo duraturæ," to endure for ever.

Digitized by Google

For there God doth not only promise to be our Father in [for the] present, but also that he will be unto the end; yea, his adoption is extended beyond death, because it bringeth us unto the eternal inheritance.

The residue are put to commend the virtue and dignity of the gospel. He calleth the gospel *the preaching of Christ*, so that surely the whole sum thereof is contained in the knowledge of Christ. He calleth his doctrine *the revelation of the mystery*, which ought not only to make us more attentive in hearing of it, but also impress an high reverence thereof in our hearts; and how high a *secret* that is he signifieth, when he addeth that, *from the beginning of the world*, by [during] so many ages, it was hidden.

Verily, it hath not a proud and haughty wisdom, such as the sons of this world court, of whom also it is therefore contemned; but it declareth those unspeakable treasures of celestial wisdom above every capacity; which, if the angels also themselves do reverence with admiration, surely no man can sufficiently wonder at it. Neither ought his wisdom to be therefore less esteemed, because it lieth hid under a base and simple style, because so it hath pleased the Lord to subdue the arrogancy of the flesh. And because great doubt might arise how this mystery, which by so many ages was hidden, did so suddenly appear, for that he teacheth that that came not to pass through the temerity of men, nor by chance, but by the eternal ordinance of God. Where also he shutteth the gate against curious questions, which the waywardness of man's wit is wont to move; for whatsoever cometh suddenly, and beside their expectation, they think it is done at unawares, whereby they gather oftentimes wickedly, that the works of God are absurd, or, at the least, they entangle themselves with many troublesome doubts. Paul, therefore, admonisheth, that that which appeared now suddenly was decreed of God before the world was made.

But lest any should make a doubt, therefore, that he might charge the gospel with newness,[1] and so defame it,

[1] "Novitatis," novelty.

Digitized by Google

he allegeth the Scriptures of the prophets, where that was forespoken which we see now fulfilled; for all the prophets have given so large testimony unto the gospel, that it cannot elsewhere be better confirmed. And by this means God did rightly prepare the minds of his, lest the novelty of a thing wherewith they were not acquainted should too much astonish them.

Objection. If any object that there is a contrariety in the words of Paul, because he saith that that mystery of the which God hath given testimony by his prophets was hidden in all ages,

Answer. this knot is easily unfolded by Peter, namely, that the pro-

1 Pet. i. 12. phets, while they diligently inquired of the salvation offered to us, did not minister to themselves but to us. Therefore God, by speaking then, held his peace,[1] because he held the revelation of those things of the which he would have his servants to prophesy in suspense.

Although it is not certainly agreed upon among the learned in what sense, both here and [in his Epistle] to the

Eph. iii. 9. Ephesians, he calleth the gospel *an hidden mystery*, the opinion of those is more firm which refer it to the calling of the Gentiles, which Paul himself precisely toucheth [in his

Col. i. 27. Epistle] to the Colossians; yet I, albeit I confess that to be one cause, cannot be brought to believe that [it] is the only cause. It seemeth more probable unto me that Paul had respect also unto the other differences of the Old and New Testament; for although the prophets in old time taught all those things which are expounded by Christ and his apostles, yet they taught them with such obscurity, in comparison of the clear light of the gospel, that it is no marvel if they be said to have been *hidden*, which now are made manifest. Neither is it without cause that the Prophet

Mal. iv. 2. Malachi saith there should rise *the Sun of Righteousness;* neither that the Prophet Esai hath beforehand so highly commended the ambassage of the Messias; finally, nor[2] that the gospel is called *the kingdom of God;* but we may better gather, by the thing itself, that then at length were the

[1] "Tunc loquendo tacuit," was then silent though he spoke.
[2] "Non abs re," nor is it without cause, omitted.

Digitized by Google

treasures of celestial wisdom opened, when, the shadows being done away, God appeared to them in old time by his only begotten Son, as it were, face to face. He maketh mention again of that end of the preaching of the gospel whereof he made mention in the beginning of the first chapter, namely, that God might bring all nations into the obedience of faith. Rom. i. 5.

LAUS DEO, SOLI SAPIENTI, IN SECULA.

AMEN.

C. R.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INDEX.

Abba, Father, 212.
Abraham, his example, 95.
the father of the faithful, 97, 113.
justified by faith only, 97.
his faith, 97.
how the heir of the world, 108.
how the father of all, 113.
his body barren before the blessing of God, 116.
his body how dead, 116.
how justified, 116.
his laughter was without fault, 118.
Jews, how sanctified in, 322.
Adam, his fall, the effects of, 134, 135, 138.
how a figure of Christ, 138.
contrast between and Christ, 141, 142.
Adoption, spirit of, 212.
of the Jews, 245.
Adoration, external, 311.
Adulation to be avoided, 360.
Affliction, the uses of, 223, 226.
patience in, 230.
Ambition to be avoided, 375.
Ambrose, exposition by, 7.
Anabaptists, their objection to oaths unfounded, 13.
Anathema, its meaning, 243.
Angels, their office, 239.
Anger, how attributed to God, 25.
Anguish, its nature, 237.
Apostles, their office, 3.
alleged successors of, 4.
their mode of quoting Scripture, 66.
Apostolical writings, eloquence not to be sought in, 44.
Ascension of Christ, inference from, 290.
Assurance of salvation, 214, 289, 324.
Augustine referred to, 2, 30, 36, 80, 114, 116, 130, 145, 175, 186, 212, 226, 283.
Authority of Scripture not derived from the Church, 301.

Baptism, its nature, 58, 148, 149.
does not justify, 58.
analogy between and circumcision, 58, 105.
Beasts, questions as to immortality of, 218.
Believers, their felicity and God's glory connected, 17.
counsels of, why sometimes defeated, 17.
how heirs of the world, 108.
Christ the pattern of, 228.
Bible history, superiority of, 117.
Blindness, judicial, 31, 34, 316.
Blood of Christ, the only satisfaction for sin, 88.
Boasting of the Jews, 53.
Body of sin, what, 153, 156.
of death, what, 191.
used for whole corrupt nature of man, 156.
Bondage, spirit of, 212.
Brethren, offence of, to be avoided, 388, 389, 391, 392.
Bucer, expositions by, 10, 17, 99.
Budæus, expositions by, 245.

Calling, what it is, 230, 231.
effectual, 299.

Digitized by Google

Calling of the Gentiles, 9, 323.
Calvin, his Institutes referred to, 92.
Carnal, who are, 201.
Catharites confuted, 193.
Ceremonies, observance of, 392.
Charity, the bond of perfection, 360.
degrees of, 418.
kiss of, 421, 422.
Chastening, divine, what, 236.
Children of righteousness, who, 165.
Christ, heresy of Servetus, as to his humanity, 6.
his divinity and humanity, 5, 386.
the sum of the gospel, 5.
his blood the only satisfaction for sin, 88.
and Adam contrasted, 141, 142.
what meant by grafting into, 150, 151.
how he dwells in us, 206.
his resurrection, 207.
the pattern of believers, 228.
the brother of all the righteous, 228.
his seat at the Father's right hand, 234.
his intercession, 235.
his descent as man, 5, 248.
the end of the law, 284.
his ascension, inference from, 290.
David, a type of, 317.
what meant by putting on, 375.
his dominion or lordship, 384.
the coming of, 385.
in what his kingdom consists, 389.
Christian philosophy, what, 166.
priesthood, what, 406.
Christians, the soldiers of Christ, 157.
Chrysostom referred to, 77, 151, 245.
Church, the authority of Scripture not derived from the, 301.
visible, how ascertained, 310.
the only sacrifices of, 342.
true nature of the unity of, 423.
Cicero referred to, 45.
Circumcision, its true nature, 58, 59, 60, 62, 104.
analogy between and baptism, 58, 105.
Concupiscence, its nature, 175, 176.
Corruption, its universality, 33, 73, 76, 135.
Counsels, divine, how to be inquired into, 336, 337.
Covetousness condemned, 35.

David, the descent of Christ from, 5.
a type of Christ, 317.
Day of judgment, how a day of wrath, 42.
figurative use of, 373, 374.
Days, observance of, 380, 381.
Death, its power derived from sin, 146.
body of, what, 191.
how it may be wished for, 192.
Decree of God eternal, 220.
Devil. See Satan.
Dispensation, Old and New, difference between, 61.
promises of Old not confined to the present life, 400, 401.
Old typical of New, 401.
Diversity of gifts, 377.
Divinity and humanity of Christ, 5, 386.
resurrection a proof of, 6.
Domitian as described by Pliny, 74.

Ecclesiastical persons, the duty of, 73.
Edification necessary for the godly, 391.
Effectual calling, 299.
Elders, their office, 351.
Election, freedom of, 46.
of God, 227, 314, 325.
merit not the ground of, 228, 262, 263.
general and particular, 251, 252, 254, 256, 259, 333.
objections to, 260, 261.
sovereignty of, 265, 267.
inscrutable nature of, 269, 270, 274.
Eloquence not to be expected in the apostolical writings, 44.
Enemies, love of, 362.
Erasmus, expositions by, 18, 30, 45, 116, 117, 120, 138, 156, 162, 185, 195, 196, 201, 216, 356, 358, 359, 406, 420.
Esau, why postponed to his brother, 257.

Digitized by Google

Eusebius referred to, 30.
Exposition of Scripture, 349. See Scripture, &c.

Faith, the nature of, 8, 100, 110, 293, 394.
its connection with holiness, 9, 10.
the gift of God, 11.
its connection with the gospel, 23.
how it justifies, 81.
Abraham's, 97.
how related to the promise, 98.
how counted for righteousness, 99.
connected with repentance, 196.
incompatible with merit of works, 280.
its seat not in the head, but the heart, 293.
grounded on the Word of God, 300.
how far compatible with fear, 323, 324.
Fall, Adam's, its consequences, 134, 135, 138.
Fame, how far to be regarded, 359.
Fear, how far faith is compatible with, 323, 324.
Felicity of believers and God's glory connected, 17.
Flesh, for man not regenerate, 187.
to be in, what meant by, 173.
sons of the, what, 252.
Foreknowledge in God, what, 227, 309.
Freedom of election, 46.
Free-will not in the natural man, 203.
Fulness of the Gentiles, what, 319, 330.

Gellius referred to, 78.
Gentiles not excused by ignorance, 48, 302.
fulness of, what, 319, 330.
Gifts, right use of, 16.
diversity of, 377.
Glorying excluded, 96.
God, how said to be angry, 25.
his unsearchableness, 26.
his perfections, how manifested, 26, 27.
God, no respecter of persons, 39, 46.
how glorified by man's iniquity, 69, 70.
not the author of sin, 203, 266.
his foreknowledge, 227, 309.
his will always just, 268.
sons of, 274.
his righteousness contrasted with that of man, 283.
his secret counsel, how to be inquired into, 336.
Good intention, insufficiency of, 282.
Gospel, its nature, 4.
doctrine of not new, 4.
promised before, 4, 286.
relation between and promises, 4.
wholly contained in Christ, 4.
Christ the sum of, 5.
the preaching of precious, 14.
for whom ordained, 18, 19.
how a savour of death, 20.
relation of to faith, 23.
why called the gospel of Paul, 51.
knowledge of, how abused, 55.
the end of, 406.
why called mystery, 428.
Grace, salvation wholly of, 9.
how defined by the schoolmen, 140.
doctrine of, not of licentious tendency, 147, 148.
sovereignty of, 278.
Grafting into Christ, what, 150, 151.
Grief for reprobate, how allowable, 243.

Hardening, what meant by in Scripture, 265.
Heart, different meanings of, 49, 293.
Heresy of Servetus, as to humanity of Christ, 6.
Pelagian, 135.
History, its uses, 117.
superiority of that of the Bible, 117.
Hope, how attributed to inanimate objects, 219.
how we are saved by, 221.
its nature, 322.
Hospitality, duty of, 355.
Humanity of Christ, 5, 386.
heresy of Servetus as to 6.

Digitized by Google

Humility, duty of, 358.
Hypocrisy, its nature and punishment, 37, 38, 40.
Hypocritical worship, 14.

Idolatry, insulting to God, 33.
Ignorance, Gentiles not excused by, 48, 302.
Immortality of animals, questions as to, 218.
Imputation of righteousness, 98, 144.
of sin, 136.
of unrighteousness, 144.
Incredulity the greatest fault of the Jews, 332.
Inner man, what, 190.
Inquiry, sobriety in, enjoined, 345, 346.
Intention good, insufficiency of, 382.
Intercession of Christ, 235.
of the Spirit, 224.

Jerome, reference to, 77.
Jews, origin of the name, 53.
their boasting, 53.
their privileges, 62, 71, 246, 302.
divine oracles, why committed to, 63.
some true believers were always among, 64.
their adoption, 245.
how sanctified in Abraham, 322.
their incredulity, 332.
Josephus referred to, 52.
Judging of others, how far allowable, 379.
Judgment, day of, how a day of wrath, 42.
Judicial blindness, 31, 84, 316.
Justification, none by the law, 48.
its nature, 80, 85, 91, 93, 98, 293.
by faith, 81.
not by works, 313, 371.
Justify, baptism does not, 58.
what meant by, 233.

Kingdom of Christ, wherein it consists, 389.
Kiss of charity, 421, 422.
Kissing of the Pax, whence, 422.
Knowledge of gospel, how abused, 55.

Lactantius referred to, 30.
Law, written, not necessary to condemnation, 47.
no justification by, 48.
different meanings of, 77, 170, 286.
uses of the, 82, 110, 112, 144, 168, 212.
how fulfilled in Christ, 94.
how it increases sin, 145.
not to be under the, what, 159, 160.
how the strength of sin, 171.
the rule of life, 178.
why none saved by, 178.
in what sense spiritual, 181.
a fourfold, 189.
of the spirit, what, 194, 195.
of sin, what, 195.
Christ the end of, 284.
how fulfilled by love, 371.
Lenity, superior power of, 341.
Letter and spirit contrasted, 60, 61.
Love, how it fulfils the law, 371.
Lycurgus, charge of sacrilege against, 56.

Magistrates, how, and to what end, ordained, 365.
duty of subjection to, 365.
duty of, 366.
evil, scourges of God, 366.
Man, why made, 26.
how called a liar, 65.
old, what, 151.
opposition within, 190.
inner, what, 190.
Mankind, universally condemned, 218.
Meats, choice of, 387, 388.
Mercy, duty of showing, 36.
divine, not anticipated by our merit, 128.
Merit, not proved by reward, 43, 287.
excluded, 90.
de congruo, and *de condigno*, 90, 91, 215.
not the ground of election, 228, 262, 263.
incompatible with faith, 280.
Ministers of the Word, how said to save, 320.
their duty, 424.

Digitized by Google

Ministry of the Word commended, 20, 298, 320.
Miracles, use of, 408.
Moral conjecture of schoolmen, 126.
precepts of philosophers imperfect, 340.
Mortification, duty of, 153.
Moses, how wished to be put out of the book of life, 245.
his proper office, 286, 287.
perfectly accords with Paul, 291.
Mystery, gospel why called, 428.

Nature, corruption of, 182.
Night, figurative use of, 373.
Novatians, sect of, 88, 193.
Nuns, origin of, 419.

Oaths, not unlawful, 13, 242.
objection of Anabaptists to, 13.
Offence of brethren to be avoided, 388, 389, 391, 392.
Old man, what, 151.
Old and New Dispensation compared, 89.
Oracles, divine, why committed to the Jews, 63.
Origen, his opinion as to the name of Paul, 2.
referred to, 77, 138.
Ovid referred to, 56.

Papists, their denial of sin in the regenerate, 176.
the strange philosophy of, 205.
absurd inference of, 287.
their forced obedience, 341.
their kissing of the Pax, whence, 422.
Patience, advantages of, 43, 361.
how produced by tribulation, 128.
inseparable from faith, 222.
in affliction, 230.
its true nature, 398.
Paul, origin of his name, 2.
his authority, 2, 3.
not called on account of his own worthiness, 7.
gospel, how called his, 51.
his apostleship, general and special, 88.
his humility, 404.
Paul, no proof of journey into Spain, 411.
his faith and integrity, 413.
Pax, the kissing of, 422.
Peace, how to be cultivated, 360.
Pelagian heresy, 135.
Perfection of God, how manifested, 26, 27.
of righteousness, 123.
unattainable here, 193.
charity the bond of, 418.
Perseverance of saints, 126, 240.
Person, what meant by, 46.
Peter, not in Rome at the date of this Epistle, 421.
Pharaoh, how hardened, 264.
Philosophers, moral precepts of, imperfect, 340.
Philosophy, true Christian, 166.
strange, of Papists, 205.
Pliny, his description of Domitian, 74.
Power of the sword, 367, 368.
Prayer, stated and ejaculatory, 15.
genuine, 213.
advantages of, 415.
whence, to dead saints, 415.
intercessory, 415.
Preaching of the Word, 298.
excellence of, 14.
how to be performed, 19.
Predestination, its meaning, 229.
to be discussed, but soberly, 258, 259.
Pride to be avoided, 357.
Priesthood, Christian, what, 406.
Privileges of the Jews, 62, 71, 246, 302.
Profession, false, insulting to God, 57.
Promiso, sons of the, 252.
Promises of Old Dispensation, not confined to the present life, 400, 401.

Rabbins, misinterpretation by, 305.
Regeneration only begun here, and perfected by degrees, 153, 184, 206.
Relation between God and believers, 12.
between faith and the Gospel, 23.
between faith and the promise, 98.

Digitized by Google

Repentance and faith connected, 196.
Reprobate, grief for, how allowable, 243.
Reprobation, cause of, inscrutable, 315.
Reputation, just regard to, 359.
Resurrection of Christ attributed to the Father, how, 207.
a proof of his divinity, 6.
Revenge forbidden, 358, 360, 361, 362.
Reward, merit not proved by, 43, 287.
Righteous, how rewarded, 43.
Righteousness, wherein consists, 22.
through Christ only, 81.
efficient, material, and instrumental cause of, 83.
imputation of, 98, 144.
how faith counted for, 99.
the beginning and perfection of, 123.
who are children of, 165.
of God, how contrasted with that of man, 283.

Sacraments, nature and use of, 105, 149.
distinction of schoolmen as to, 107.
Sacrifice, none but that of Christ, 343.
Sacrifices of Christian Church, what, 342.
Sacrilege, its nature, 55.
charge of against Lycurgus, 56.
Saints, perseverance of, 126, 240.
prayer to dead, 415.
Salvation wholly of grace, 9.
none by the law, 178.
assurance of, 214, 289, 324.
Sarah, why reproved, 118.
Satan, the minister of God's wrath, 32.
his influence, 43.
Satisfaction for sin, only through the blood of Christ, 88.
Schism, its true character, 423.
Schoolmen, their half remission, folly of, 101.
their distinction as to Sacraments, 107.
doctrine of, as to moral conjecture, 126.
their definition of grace, 140.
Schoolmen, their distinction of merit, 215.
Scripture, how quoted by the apostles, 66.
how to be expounded, 349.
study of, 398.
Seal of the Spirit, 6.
Servetus, his heresy as to the humanity of Christ, 6.
Sin, to be under, what, 72.
imputation of, 136.
how increased by the law, 145.
gives death its power, 146.
body of, 153, 156.
wages of, 166.
how law the strength of, 171.
how differing in the righteous and the wicked, 183. See Satisfaction.
Sloth to be avoided, 262, 353.
Soldiers of Christ, 157.
Sons, revelation of, 216.
of the flesh, 252.
of the promise, 252.
of God, 274.
Sovereignty of election, 265, 267.
of grace, 278.
Spain, doubtful if visited by Paul, 411.
Spirit, the seal of, 6.
and letter contrasted, 60, 61.
walking according to, 194.
law of, what, 194, 195.
how both of God and Christ, 205.
what to live according to, 208.
influence of, universal and special, 209.
of adoption, 212.
of bondage, 212.
intercession of, 224.
Spiritual, who are, 205.
Stoics refuted by Augustine, 36.
Strong to support the weak, 395, 396.
Subjection to magistrates, 365.
Subjects, obedience due by, 369, 372.
Succession, apostolic, 4.
Sword, power of, 367, 368.
Sympathy, duty of, 357.

Temperance, duty of, 375, 376.
Tribulation, how it worketh patience, 128.

Digitized by Google

Tribulation, what meant by, 237.
Tribute, duty of paying, 369.
Truth, the rule of God's will, 44.

Unity of the Church, true nature of, 423.
Universality of corruption, 33, 73, 76, 135.
Unrighteousness, imputation of, 144.
Unsearchableness of God, 26.
Uses of affliction, 223, 226.
of miracles, 408.

Visible Church, how ascertained, 310.

Wages of sin, 167.
Weak, duty of the strong to support, 395, 396.
Wickedness, different species of, 35, 36.
the worst form of, 36, 37.
Widows, office of, in the Primitive Church, 350, 418.
Will of God, truth the rule of, 44.
of the natural man not free, 203.
always just, 268.
Word of God, ministry of, commended, 20, 298, 320.
its power, 118, 119.
the preaching of, 298.
faith grounded on the, 300.
authority of, not derived from the Church, 301.
ministers of, how said to save, 320; their duty, 424.
Works, meaning of the term, 78.
cannot justify, 47.
Worship, true, what it is, 13.
in spirit, what, 13, 14.
hypocritical, 14.
the chief part of, 119.
Wrath, Satan the minister of, 32.
day of judgment, how a day of, 42.
Written law, not necessary to condemnation, 47.

EDINBURGH PRINTING COMPANY,
12, South St David Street.

Digitized by Google

61621606

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google